

Hafa Adai!

In pending case vs Torres, Kingman opposes request for his disqualification. **PAGE 3**
23 vendors for Taste of the Marianas in June 2023. **PAGE 5**

\$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023

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CUC records: CNMI gov't unpaid utility billings reached \$66.37M

» Aldan: CHCC jeopardizing everything else to the tune of \$53M
» 'Remove CUC board, hire own legal counsel, have elected PUC commissioners'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As of March 31, 2023, the CNMI government's unpaid utility billing has reached a staggering \$66.37 million, including the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s \$53.58 million, based CUC records, according to Rep. Vincent S. Aldan (Ind-Saipan).

See **BILLINGS** on Page 4

Voerg resigns from CUC

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Chretien T. Voerg resigned yesterday from his current duties as acting Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director and as deputy executive director



Voerg

for water/wastewater, leaving behind a rudderless CUC that had just lost two previous heads. There was no immediate word

See **VOERG** on Page 4

Concepcion back as MVA chief

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Christopher A. Concepcion, who is currently deputy director of the CNMI Office of Planning and Development, will resume his role as Marianas Visitors Authority's executive director next week.



Concepcion

Concepcion, who resigned from his post at MVA in 2019, confirmed in a text that he is set to resume his role as acting MVA chief.

See **MVA** on Page 4



Rep. Vincent S. Aldan (Ind-Saipan), fourth from left, who chairs the House of Representatives Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications Committee, talks about their findings on the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Fuel Adjustment Charge during a press conference in the House chamber Tuesday afternoon. Also in the photo are members of the PUTC committee.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Senate confirms 6 more Palacios appointees

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate confirmed yesterday the appointment of former senator Teresita A. Santos for the position of the Department of Public Lands secretary and former senator Ray N. Yumul for the position of Department of Public Works secretary, as well as four others for various board, department, and commission positions.

The Senate also confirmed the appointments of Tracy B.

See **SENATE** on Page 4



Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, second from left, and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, rightmost, on Wednesday administered the oath of office to Tracy B. Norita, third from left, to serve as Finance secretary; Teresita A. Santos, inset, to serve as Public Lands secretary; Donna M. Flores, third from right, to serve on the CNMI Scholarship Office board of directors; Joseph P. Fitial, second from right, to serve as a member of the Civil Service Commission; and Denn M. Manglona, leftmost, to serve as a member of the Board of Professional Licensing.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN
Days until
'touchback rule'
takes effect on
Sept. 30, 2023:
156

INSIDE



BUSINESS

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce has announced the relocation of its offices.

PAGE 11



NATION

US President Joe Biden's 2024 campaign will be different from the coronavirus-marred 2020 edition.

PAGE 12



LIFE & STYLE

Harry Belafonte, the civil rights and entertainment giant who became an activist, has died at 96.

PAGE 15



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Local



SBDCN facilitates training at Set SAIL Conference

The CNMI Small Business Development Center Network at the Northern Marianas College was invited to facilitate training during a breakout session at the 2nd Annual Set SAIL Conference held on April 13, 2023, at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

CNMI SBDC marketing manager/outreach specialist Roman Tudela speaks with the Set SAIL participants.

SBDCN

The breakout session was titled "Side Hustle with the Hassle: CNMI SBDCN Programs & Services." Facilitating the training were CNMI SBDC associate network director Mercilynn K. Palec, and CNMI SBDCN marketing manager/outreach specialist Roman Tudela.

The Set SAIL (Students, Advocacy, Inclusion, and Leadership) Conference is a student leadership event hosted by NMC's Office of Student Activities and Leadership.

The CNMI SBDCN pivoted this outreach opportunity to

demonstrate the attainability of pursuing higher education at NMC in conjunction with starting a small business with support from the CNMI SBDCN. With 32 participants in the training, Palec conducted a training session with interested students to become clients in order to receive CNMI SBDCN services.

This is one of many outreach efforts to inform current and potential new small business owners of the CNMI of the services available at the CNMI SBDCN. (SBDCN)

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune

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PET OF THE WEEK

Maggie

Maggie is a long-legged female terrier mix. She is super-friendly and loves being loved. This tall girl is always smiling. She walks great on a leash, but will follow you everywhere without one too.

Also, previously featured puppies Maia, Iris, and Coco are still in need of a home!

If you're interested in adopting Maggie or any of the puppies, please contact the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido for more information.

Shelter hours are from Monday to Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. Contact them at (670)-234-3647 (DOGS). You can also make your way to the shelter to check out more dogs available for adoption!

For inquiries about veterinary services please reach out to Saipan Humane Society at info@saipanhumanesociety.org or Whatsapp +1 (670) 838-7387.



Saipan Tribune is partnering with Lauren Cabrera, founder of the Saipan Humane Society, in collaboration with the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido, to feature their adoptable dogs into loving homes. Whether you are looking for a guard dog, lap dog, hiking buddy, or playful puppy, they most likely have the dog for you!

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

4.5-magnitude quake near Guam

At 2:20pm on April 26, 2023, a report of a 4.5-magnitude earthquake occurred at 53 kilometers north-northeast of Yigo village, Guam. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at (670) 237-8000. (PR)

Scheduled power service interruption for Tanapag

There will be a scheduled

power service interruption in Tanapag on Monday, May 1, 2023, from 9am to 12pm.

■ Area(s) affected:

Tanapag; Ammurh Drive

■ Purpose: For the line crew to replace two rotted primary power poles

■ Water well(s) affected: None

■ Wastewater facility affected: None

■ Traffic Light(s): None

For more information, contact the CUC Hotline at (670) 236-4333 or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). (PR)

Kingman opposes request for disqualification

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The special prosecutor hired by the Office of the Attorney General to assist in prosecuting former governor Ralph DL Torres in his pending criminal case at the Superior Court has opposed the defense's request for his disqualification.

In addition, James Kingman says the court should also deny the defense's motion to reconsider its previous order denying the defense motion for the Office of the Attorney General to withdraw or be disqualified as prosecutor.

According to Kingman, the defense's motion for reconsideration is improper and unnecessary.



Kingman

"The delay on the reconsideration motion belies defendant's claims to harm. Defendant claims that the court should act based on the underlying principles of Rules 54 and 59(e) of the NMI Rules of Civil Procedure. Setting aside that it is the Criminal Rules that guide, this is not a final order or judgment, and that these rules apply for litigation regarding multiple parties and unclear pecuniary awards, even those rules would require such a motion to be served not later than 10 days after the entry of the judgment," Kingman said.

According to Saipan Tribune archives, the defense team for Torres claims that the attorneys employed by the Office of the Attorney General are not in compliance with the Model Rules of Professional Conduct as held by the CNMI Supreme Court in various other cases.

Torres' team of lawyers, in a statement to the media, said they want the Superior Court to hold that the attorneys employed by the OAG be subject to and in compliance with the Model Rules of Professional Conduct.

The defense claims that multiple "facts" prove that the OAG did not comply with the MRPC, like the fact that the complainant in this case, Attorney General Edward Manibusan, was not "screened" or "walled off" from the case.

"The team's position has always been that the attorney general was the former governor's attorney, responsible for providing him with legal guidance. As such, the AG cannot represent a client, and then turn around and prosecute that same client right after. However, the OA's position is that AG Manibusan does not have to be disqualified because he has been screened out of this case and is not involved in any way," the defense stated.

"During the hearing to disqualify the OAG from prosecuting this case, the prosecutors and AG Manibusan represented to the court that AG Manibu-

san was 'walled off' from the case...whereby only Mr. Robert Glass and Mr. Steve Kessel, the attorneys prosecuting this case, had access to the case

file," the defense added.

However, the team said one of the "facts" proving in compliance was Manibusan personally hiring Kingman.

"It was AG Manibusan who negotiated the agreement for legal services with the special prosecutor. It was also AG Manibusan who instructed

Department of Finance to process and release the special prosecutor's retainer paid for by public funds. In addition, the special prosecutor is

supposed to report directly to AG Manibusan. These facts, and more, show that AG Manibusan is not screened off the case," the team stated.

YES!

TRIPLE J SAYS

EASY FINANCING? YES!

EASY TRADE-IN? YES!

FAST & FRIENDLY? YES!

QUALITY USED CAR

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SENATE

From Page 1

Norita to serve as Department of Finance secretary, Denn M. Manglona to serve as a member of the Board of Professional Licensing, Rufo T. Mafnas to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors, and Joseph Patrick P. Fitial as a member of the Civil Service Commission.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios immediately swore in five of the newly-confirmed appointees in a ceremony at the Office of the Governor's conference room.

All nine senators voted to adopt the report of the Senate Executive



Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) congratulates Ray N. Yumul, who was confirmed as Department of Public Works secretary. **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**



Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang congratulates Denn M. Manglona, who was confirmed to serve as a member of the Board of Professional Licensing representing Rota. **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**

Appointments and Government Investigations that recommended the confirmation of the the appointments of Santos, Yumul, Mafnas, and Fitial.

Former governor Benigno R. Fitial and his wife, Josie, attended the session; Joseph Fitial is their son.

Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang was also present at the session and congratulated the appointees.

Eight senator voted "yes" to con-

firm Norita's appointment. EAGI Committee chair Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) abstained as Norita is her niece.

Seven senators voted "yes" to confirm the appointment of Denn Manglona. Sens. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) and Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota) abstained. The appointee is son of Sen. Paul Manglona and cousin of Sen. Donald Manglona.



Former governor Benigno R. Fitial and his wife, Josie, and their daughter, pose with their son, Joseph Patrick P. Fitial, who was confirmed to serve as a member of the Civil Service Commission. **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**

BILLINGS

From Page 1

This is on top of what commercial and residential customers owe CUC. In all, the total outstanding collection owed CUC is over \$88 million.

"That one agency is jeopardizing everything else to the tune of \$53 million. This is without penalty," said Aldan, referring to what CHCC owes CUC.

Aldan, who chairs the House of Representatives Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications Committee, disclosed the CNMI government's huge unpaid utility billings in a news briefing in the House chamber Tuesday afternoon about their findings on CUC's Fuel Adjustment Charge.

Based on CUC records that Aldan shared with the media, CUC has \$2.28 million in accounts receivable from the Commonwealth Ports Authority; \$53.68 million with disputed accounts receivable from CHCC; \$8.97 million with disputed receivable from the central government; and \$1.42 million with disputed receivables from other government agencies.

Aldan said they called for the news briefing to share what the PUTC discovered in their investigation on CUC. He noted that CUC's FAC rate is a pressing issue that concerns everyone. "We all know how hard it can be to pay these bills. And it's a

problem that affects us all," he said, adding that the FAC rate is a problem that needs urgent attention.

The FAC rate is the cost that CUC pays its fuel supplier for fuel used to generate electricity and other operation and maintenance costs.

Aldan said the PUTC has sought feedback on solutions to the high cost of utilities and they believe the priorities of the Legislature should include restructuring CUC, in coordination with the administration and government agencies, and collaborating with stakeholders to develop affordable utility rates for all CNMI rate payers.

"People must understand why is your FAC rate so high? A lot of it has to do with the collection that CUC still trying to collect," he said.

Interference

Aldan cited a four-page summary of an Office of the Public Auditor's Report for 2017, which states that a review of CUC's financial audit reports showed that the CNMI had a balance of about \$6.4 million in unpaid utility billings, representing 19% of the \$34.4 million due from all customers in fiscal year 2010.

OPA found that the CNMI government's unpaid utility balance rose to \$21.9 million, or 53%, of the total \$41.6 million due from all customers in fiscal year 2014.

The OPA report disclosed that CUC has not achieved its purpose to operate as an independent public agency, with

the independence to perform as a non-subsidized, autonomous corporation due to interferences by the Legislature, various governors, and the boards of directors throughout its history.

In its conclusion and recommendations, OPA stated that almost 30 years of history has shown that CUC in its current form is barely sustainable and is obviously inefficient.

OPA said what they have witnessed is a series of failures, which have ultimately required government bailouts affecting the general fund, Marianas Public Lands Trust, and the Commonwealth Development Authority (now Commonwealth Economic Development Authority), to provide for emergency generation and other operations.

OPA said these bailouts enabled CUC to continue, but at a major financial cost and disruption of services.

OPA found that CUC consistently operates as an unsustainable public entity, unable to recover its cost of operations and struggling to retain qualified executive officers.

OPA said CUC has experienced numerous emergency declarations and executive orders by the Executive Branch and endured repeated modifications of laws that continually fail to address long-term solutions.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

Santos thanked the senators for their unanimous support of her confirmation. She said there is a lot of work to be done, and each day is a unique learning experience, given the diverse challenges impacting public lands in all three senatorial districts.

"Nonetheless, DPL applies an open-door policy and will continue to

work collaboratively with our CNMI leaders, clientele and the general public," she said.

In a separate interview, Yumul said he is thankful to the Senate for their confidence in him. Citing the many DPW projects and programs, Yumul said there is a lot of work to be done in the department.

MVA

From Page 1

"MVA will issue a press release soon," said Concepcion.

Saipan Tribune tried to reach out to MVA board chair Gloria Cavanagh for confirmation and a statement, but the MVA chair has yet to respond.

Concepcion resigned as MVA managing director back on March 12, 2019. He became the managing director in April 2016.

Concepcion and his team at MVA managed to achieve major milestones during his tenure, chief of which when they finally secured direct air service from Japan via Skymark Airlines.

Skymark was the first Japanese carrier to operate flights to Saipan since Japan Airlines withdrew from the market in 2005.

Replacing Concepcion a few months later was Priscilla Iakopo who, after three years as executive director, resigned in October 2022, in support of her husband, former CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs

executive officer Stanley T. Iakopo, who had also resigned.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Stanley T. Iakopo resigned on Sept. 26, stating that he and former governor Ralph DLG Torres no longer share the same values and principles with respect to good order and discipline.

Iakopo's ascent as MVA chief came at a challenging time, with the CNMI rebuilding the Japan market with the entry of Skymark Airlines, a weakened Korea market, which suffered after the CNMI figured in international news in the wake of Super Typhoon Yutu in October last year, and a comparatively weaker China market.

During the absence of an executive director, MVA's deputy executive director Judy Torres stepped up to the plate.

During her time as acting executive director, Torres helped MVA further revive its tourism industry, which was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Super Typhoon Yutu just a year before.

VOERG

From Page 1

on who will be appointed to lead CUC temporarily.

Voerg, who has been employed with CUC for about a year now, submitted his resignation just two days after being designated to assume the position of acting executive director, in place of Dr. Dallas M. Peavey Jr., who was let go from the post last Monday. Peavey himself came to the top CUC position after Gary P. Camacho resigned in February.

This developed as Gov. Arnold I. Palacios on Tuesday denied instructing CUC board chair pro tem Janice A. Tenorio to terminate Peavey's employment.

Peavey was hired last year as deputy director for CUC's electric power systems. He became the acting CUC executive director last Feb. 21.

In a letter to Tenorio yesterday, Voerg said his resignation as acting executive director will take effect today, Thursday, at 4:30pm.

Voerg told Tenorio that he also resigned as deputy director for water/wastewater effective June 2, 2023. He said his last day of work will be June 1, 2023. He did not indicate his reason.

Voerg cited paragraph 8.B of his employment contract to request that his 30-day advance resignation notice be waived.

"With your approval of this waiver, my last day of work will be May 12, 2023," he told Tenorio.

Tenorio designated Voerg as acting executive director after she terminated Peavey for cause last Monday. Three days later, there has been no official word yet on what prompted

Tenorio to sack Peavey.

In response to *Saipan Tribune's* question Tuesday, Palacios said he never instructed Tenorio to terminate Peavey's employment.

"I had questions also in terms of some of the stories coming out in the media about Peavey's issues," the governor said.

He said he had intended to talk to Tenorio about Peavey's issues to see if those are accurate.

According to online news report dated August 2022, an indictment was filed against Peavey in Texas many years ago for three felony charges involving falsification of travel expenses and invoices.

Peavey reportedly pleaded guilty to all charges and received a deferred adjudication of guilty. He was placed on probation for five years. The case, however, was subsequently dismissed in 2014 because Peavey had fully paid his restitution and probation fees.

Deferred adjudication refers to a judge-ordered community supervision that allows a defendant to accept responsibility for a crime without an actual conviction placed on the record.

Last month, Peavey told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview that he is willing to serve the position of CUC executive director in a permanent capacity, but it would depend on the discussion and negotiation.

Peavey's termination, which was done without board approval or a vote, comes after he issued notices of disconnection to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and Department of Public Works due to unpaid power and water services amounting to \$53.6 million and \$1.12 million as of March 31, 2023, respectively.

23 vendors for Taste of the Marianas in June 2023

Twenty-one food vendors and two drink vendors will be featured at the 24th Annual Taste of the Marianas

International Food Festival & Beer Garden slated every Saturday evening in June 2023 at Garapan Fishing

Base in Saipan.

The annual festival, organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority, features

USDOL: Guam Shipyards failed to follow fed safety standards in '22 rigger death

PITI, Guam—A federal inspection found that a ship repair company might have prevented the death of a rigger at the Port of Guam in November 2022 had they followed legally required safety standards for operating cranes.

Inspectors with the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration learned the rigger was one of 12 workers employed by Guam Industrial Services Inc.—operating as Guam Shipyard—to demolish a gantry crane at the time of the incident. They determined the company was using a barge-mounted crane to lower one leg of a 100-foot-high gantry crane as two welders and the rigger waited on an elevated platform to remove it. Once removed, the part would be cut up and scrapped.

As welders on the platform cut the crane leg's base, its full weight caused the barge crane's boom to bend, which snapped its cable and allowed the load to swing and fatally strike the rigger.

Inspectors learned that, on the morning of the inci-

dent, workers raised concerns that the load was too heavy for the crane and suggested cutting the load into pieces. Company management instructed employees to remove the leg in one piece.

"Guam Shipyard could have prevented this crane failure and its tragic outcome by ensuring effective and

» OSHA proposes more than \$290K in penalties in crane fatality at Port of Guam

necessary training, procedures and work practices were provided and followed," said OSHA Area Director

Roger Forstner in Honolulu. "The company's leadership was made aware of their crew's safety concerns, yet failed to safeguard its employees as the law requires."

Specifically, OSHA found that Guam Shipyard:

■ Failed to determine the weight of the load being lifted by the crane.

■ Proceeded with a lift that exceeded the rated capacity of the crane.

■ Failed to ensure that each crane operator was trained, certified/licensed and evaluated.

OSHA has proposed \$291,312 in penalties, an amount set by fed-

eral statutes, and cited the company for two willful violations and one serious violation. Based in Santa Rita, Guam, Guam Industrial Services Inc. is a local, independent company that provides ship repair services including maintenance, support, scheduled overhaul, emergency repair and industrial services.

Following the November incident, OSHA launched a crane safety initiative in Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands to enhance safety measures and protect workers against crane hazards. Compliance officers conducted inspections at ports, construction sites and other locations where cranes are in use, as well as outreach activities, on-site consultations and promoted partnerships and alliances to improve compliance and prevent injuries and fatalities.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citations and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director, or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. (PR)



MVA

File photo shows the Cup Bab booth welcoming patrons at the 23rd Annual Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden on June 18, 2022, at Garapan Fishing Base, Saipan.

highlights of the various cuisine found in the multicultural Marianas. Participating food vendors this year will be Chagi Norf, Chow Time, Cristiano's, Furusato,

Herman's Modern Bakery, Islands Grinz, Java Joe's, Kamakaze's, Kinpachi Restaurant, Korean BAB, Loco Taco, Majesty Restaurant, Matty's BBQ, Pho

Tam, Plumeria Steakhouse, Shirley's Coffee Shop, Surf Club/Great Harvest, T-Bar, The Hut, Tyler's Gelatte Stone, and Vi-lynn's BBQ. Drink vendors are Marpac and Westco.

"We're looking forward to another great Taste of the Marianas this year, thanks to the enthusiastic support of our vendors," said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. "We are also bringing back this year some contests and demonstrations of Chamorro and Carolinian food for a full gourmet experience, no pun intended."

This year's festival will be held on June 3, 10, 17, and 24, 2023, in part to coincide with a large influx of visitors anticipated for the Oceania Athletics Association Masters Championship 2023 in late June. The festival will feature affordable dishes from local hotels and restaurants, live entertainment, and arts and crafts sales from 6pm to 10pm nightly and until 11pm on the final night.

For more information or for vendor inquiries, contact MVA Community Projects specialist Ray Villagomez at rvillagomez@mymarianas.com or 664-3200. (MVA)

Tapped Out is latest ProaPerks partner

Tapped Out, a taproom located on Micro Beach Road, is the latest company to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks partner, joining many other businesses and organizations.

All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks pro-

gram can now receive a 5% discount on any purchase at the taproom.

More information about Tapped Out can be found on their website at tappedout.mp.

Tapped Out joins the growing list of ProaPerks partners. Companies and other interest-

ed organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks program and take advantage of the buying power of thousands of individuals that include NMC alumni, students, and employees, can find more information by emailing proaperks@marianas.edu. (PR)



Tapped Out is the latest to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks Partner, joining many other businesses and organizations. More information about their special promotion for ProaPerks card holders can be found at www.marianas.edu/proaperks.

NMC



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-23-018

OFFICE SPACE LEASE FOR CUC ROTA's ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS & OPERATIONS

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the lease of a suitable office and operations support facility for the Headquarters of CUC's Administration and Operations on the island of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed office space must comply with American Disabilities Act (ADA), DPW, OSHA and CNMI Zoning regulation.

The IFB package may be obtained at the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration with CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package will be emailed to the registered Proponents email ID. For registration inquiries, please email Marcela Tenorio, CUC Senior Administrative Technician via email address, marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-23-018, Office Space Lease for CUC Rota's Administrative Functions and Operations." to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on May 23, 2023**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on May 2, 2023** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Alvin King, CUC Rota Resident Manager at email address alvin.king@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

DR. DALLAS M. PEAVEY JR.
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Guam Guard hosts Region VII Chief of Staff Advisory Council



National Guard chiefs of staff from Region VII render a solemn salute at the Guam National Guard Fallen Heroes Memorial in Barrigada, April 18, 2023.

MARK SCOTT/GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

BARRIGADA, Guam—National Guard chiefs of staff from seven states visited Guam this week, as part of the ongoing efforts to prioritize Guam in regional and national defense strategy.

The seven U.S. Army Colonels, arriving from as far away as New Mexico and Colorado, spent three days tackling common issues, sharing best practices, and gaining an understanding of the cultural, historic, and geopolitical uniqueness of the island.

Col. David Santos, chief of joint staff for the Guam National Guard, invited his regional counterparts not only to strengthen relationships, but to understand some of the issues



National Guard chiefs of staff from Region VII visit a historical site with a cannon from the Spanish Colonial Era in Hagatna, Guam April 18, 2023. The delegation spent three days on the island to discuss regional issues, share best practices, and gain a better understanding of the uniqueness of Guam's operational and cultural environment.

MARK SCOTT/GUAM NATIONAL GUARD



U.S. Army Col. Nathaniel Carper, chief of staff of the New Mexico National Guard, visits the War in the Pacific National Park Asan Overlook Memorial in Guam, April 18, 2023. The memorial, which honors the nearly 2,000 Guamanians who lost their lives during the World War II occupation of Guam, was part of a cultural tour given during a Chief of Staff Advisory Council Conference for Region VII, hosted by the Guam Guard.

MARK SCOTT/GUAM NATIONAL GUARD



U.S. Army Col. Shawn Fullenbach, chief of staff of the Utah National Guard, takes a photograph of Guam's scenery during the first-ever Region VII Chief of Staff Advisory Council Conference in Hagatna, Guam May 18, 2022.

MARK SCOTT/GUAM NATIONAL GUARD

specific to Guam.

“With Guam being the only National Guard element this far West, it is important for us to sustain, build, and enhance our relationships with our regional partners to support each other,” said Santos. “You won’t understand the region until you put your foot on the ground and understand our culture, our people, and most importantly, our strategic location and the challenges we face.”

Col. Nathaniel Carper, chief


of staff of the New Mexico National Guard, was among the visitors to the 30 by 10-mile island of approximately 160,000 U.S. Citizens.

“It’s a phenomenal experience to understand,” said Carper. “We’ve heard a lot about the tyranny of distance during our visit here the last few days, and we’ve really come to appreciate that and understand the true expansiveness of the Pacific.”

In addition to working groups and meetings, the colonels visited with Guam Governor Lou Leon Guerrero, and military officials from Joint Region Marianas headquarters. After work, they visited cultural and historical sites, and attended the Chamorro Village night market.

Brig. Gen. Mike Cruz, adjutant general of the Guam National Guard, thanked the colonels during his opening remarks, and conveyed a sense of urgency to prepare for the defense of Guam.

“World War 2 is a black and white war in our collective memory, with much of what remains being old photographs and videos. But for those of us on Guam like my grandmother, who was forced to watch while her brother and son were beheaded by an invading force, it is still very much in living color. It is red blood on white sand, in front of blue ocean and sky. So thank you, chiefs, for taking the time to travel all this way. I hope you get a sense of that color while you are here,” said Cruz. *(Guam National Guard Public Affairs)*



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

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Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhc.gov.net>
Tels: (670) 234-9447 / 234-6866 / 234-7670 • Fax: (670) 234-9021

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairperson of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Agenda
- d. Adoption of Minutes: 5-7-21, 5-24-21, 7-23-21, 11-16-21, 2-25-22, and 2-25-23

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. FY 2023 Financial Statements
- b. Division Updates

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. CDBG-DR Updates
- b. NMHC Employee Handbook
- c. Request for Approval of the Conversion from Loans to Grants for the CDBG-DR Rehabilitation/Reconstruction/Homebuyer/New Construction Programs
- d. Request for Approval - Infrastructure Policies and Procedures
- e. NMHC Netrol Salary Scale
- f. Board Bylaws
- g. Audit Status Update

V. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Travel Reports from January 2023 to April 2023
- b. Updated - Division SOPs

VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT


VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII. OTHER MATTERS

IX. ADJOURNMENT


(Notes: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13 (a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/
Merced (Marcie) M. Tomokane
Chairperson of the Board



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950-1304
DEQ Tel: (670) 664-8500/01; Fax: (670) 664-8540
DCRM Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.becq.gov.mp



Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator
David M. Apatang
Lt. Governor
Zabrina S. Cruz
Director, DEQ

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PROPOSED CONSENT DECREE FOR SAIPAN INDUSTRIAL INC. CO. FACILITY
AREA OF CONCERN: MASON PLACE, AS LITO, SAIPAN

DATE: April 06, 2023

On November 30, 2022, the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) notified **Saipan Industrial Inc. Co. ("Saipan Industrial")** to begin negotiations for a consent decree for the cleanup of calcium carbide released into an unlined berm, approximately 20'x7' with an estimated depth of 6'-8', located at Saipan Industrial's industrial gas manufacturing facility at Mason Place, As Lito, Saipan.

NATURE OF RELEASE, SUSPECTED HARMFUL SUBSTANCES, AND POTENTIAL RISKS TO HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT: The unlined berm at the site is filled with calcium carbide waste, found by DEQ to be characteristically hazardous due to its pH level. As a result of the release, land areas and drainages below the Site are reasonably expected to be affected by the contamination. The proposed consent decree will require Saipan Industrial to complete removal and remediation work specified in the draft consent decree's Scope of Work, including but not limited to performance of a risk assessment to identify the nature and extent of the contamination; removal of all by-product material consistent with a removal plan; soil and groundwater sampling consistent with a sampling and analysis plan; testing of excavated materials to determine whether they are hazardous or non-hazardous for disposal purposes; and assessment of whether additional removal work or remediation is necessary.

Written comments can be submitted by mail to DEQ, P.O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950; sent by fax to 664-8540; or emailed to josh.santos@becq.gov.mp. Comments must be received by DEQ no later than May 05, 2023. All comments received by DEQ will be included as part of the permit application record and will be considered in any decisions concerning the proposed activity. In addition, if ten or more persons request a public meeting on the subject of this public notice, DEQ may hold a public meeting to receive comments. Interested persons may obtain further information by scheduling an appointment with DEQ, Chalan Pale Arnold - Middle Road.

/s/
ELI D. CABRERA
Administrator
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

/s/
ZABRINA S. CRUZ
Acting Director
Division of Environmental Quality

Name: STEVEN A. SAHAGON & EDITA Q. SAHAGON
Address: P.O. BOX 7546 SVRB
SAIPAN, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 286-1915

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re the Matter of the Petition for the Appointment of General Guardianship for:] FCD-GU CIVIL] ACTION NO.] 23-0071]

NOTICE OF HEARING

C.E.B.S.
Minor Child]
By:]
STEVEN A. SAHAGON]
EDITA Q. SAHAGON]
Petitioner]

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on May 1, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 217A before Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 2nd day of March, 2023.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/
By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Over 50 employers looking to hire at UOG job fair

The University of Guam Career Development Office is holding a job fair on Friday, April 28, from 9am to 2pm at the Calvo Field House.

UOG students, alumni, and members of the general public are welcome.

Attendees are encouraged to dress in business or business casual attire and bring their résumés.

Job applicants are also encouraged to update their profiles on social media and online networking sites such as Handshake, LinkedIn, or Facebook before they head for the job fair.

Click on this link to register: <https://url.uog.edu/2023-jobfair>

For more information, contact Sallie McDonald at 671-735-2233 or email

salliemcd@triton.uog.edu, career.development@triton.uog.edu.

The following employers have registered for the job fair:

- Aflac Providence Region
- Advance Management Inc
- Aviation Services Alliance
- Bank of Guam
- Century Insurance Company

- Citadel Pacific
- Cloverdale Foods
- Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
- Community First Guam Federal Credit Union
- Crowne Plaza Resort Guam
- Cruz Benefits Consultants Corporation
- Core Tech Group of Companies
- Department of Administration
- Department of Public Health and Social Services
- Domino's Pizza Guam
- DZSP21 LLC
- Guam Army National Guard
- Guam Temps, Inc.
- GTA
- Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)
- Dusit Thani Guam Resort and Dusit Beach Resort Guam
- International Dining Concepts LLC.
- Fresenius Medical Care
- Galaide Professional Services Incorporated
- Guam Army National Guard
- Guam Auto Spot
- Guam Claims Association

- Guam Department of Labor American Job Center
- Guam Regional Medical City
- Goodwind Development Corporation
- Hilton Guam Resort & Spa
- Hotel Nikko Guam
- Hyatt Regency Guam
- Jamaican Grill
- JMSH LLC (Holiday Resort Guam, Alupang Beach Tower, Garden Villa Hotel)
- Joint Region Marianas
- Kloppenburg Enterprises Inc.
- LSG Skychefs
- Menzies Aviation



Job seekers check out an employer's table during a job fair at the University of Guam Calvo Field House in 2019. Another job fair, scheduled for April 28 at the Field House will have more than 50 employers participating.

- Nissan Guam
- Pacific Human Resource Services Inc.
- Pacific Islands Club Guam
- Pan Pacific Retail Management (Guam) Co., Ltd
- Paul's Roving Service
- Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and IMF Detachment Guam
- Takagi & Associates, Inc.
- Techtronic Industries
- The Plaza Shopping Center
- The Bayview Hotel
- The Westin Resort Guam
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- WDI International, Inc. dba Tony Roma's & Capricciosa (UOG)

NRCS: Funding now available for conservation innovation grants

HONOLULU, Hawaii—USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service is announcing the availability of Conservation Innovation Grants State Program funding to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. Applications are being accepted now through June 5, 2023. An informational webinar is scheduled for May 4, 2023. All projects must be carried out in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, or the CNMI. Up to \$500,000 is available for the Pacific Islands Area CIG competition in fiscal year 2023.

CIG generally funds pilot projects, field demonstrations and on-farm conservation research. Project proposals must be more than \$50,000 but not exceed \$150,000 and run one to three years. The CIG applicants are usually expected to supply at least a 50-50 match. For the fiscal 2023 award process, at least 10% of the total funds available are set aside for proposals that entirely benefit historically underserved producers or entities representing those producers.

This year's state priorities are:

- Soil Health/Soil Quality
- Climate Smart Ag and Forestry
- Wildlife Habitat
- Urban and Small Farms
- Invasive Species

Funded through NRCS, CIG helps stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in conjunction with agricultural production. CIG projects are expected to lead to the transfer of conservation technologies, management systems and innovative approaches (such as market-based systems) to agricultural producers, into government technical manuals and guides or to the private sector.

"The challenges that farmers and ranchers face require innovative solutions to support their continued ability to produce the food and fiber we all depend on," said J.B. Martin, NRCS Pacific Islands Area director. "Climate change has led to more extreme weather and less available water for agriculture. At the same time, we are seeing opportunities for growth. Urban farming has increased, along with an interest in local foods and resilient food systems."

For more information and to apply, visit grants.gov. For more information about the Conservation Innovation Grants program, visit the NRCS website.

If you have difficulty accessing the grants.gov announcement or questions related to preparing application content, contact Daniel Curtis, GMS at daniel.curtis@usda.gov. (PR)



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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

No trial, no error: Fox News' Dominion lies weren't innocent mistakes

Fox News has avoided going to trial by reaching a \$787.5 million settlement with Dominion Voting Systems over the network's smearing of the company following the 2020 election.

Some have cautioned against celebrating the settlement, along one of two tracks. The first group warns of precedent and the supposed watering down of reporters' First Amendment rights that the lawsuit represents, an argument that, as writers on an editorial page that frequently criticizes the politically powerful, we would presumably be sympathetic to.

Yet while it would be a disaster for democracy for the press to suddenly be liable for criticism, denunciations and damaging revelations, or for reporters to have to bear the brunt of mistakes of the sort that are inevitable in daily coverage, Fox's actions were neither legitimate criticism nor simple error.

This board, for example, accidentally misattributed a quote in a Tuesday editorial about a CCRB investigation into NYPD Chief of Department Jeff Maddrey. These things happen in a fast-paced news environment with writers and editors more squeezed than we've ever been. As soon as we were made aware, we made the correction and acknowledged our error.

Fox News, on the other hand, repeatedly made or amplified without clarification dangerous lies, despite being fully aware that these were misrepresentations, over and over again, and in defiance of Dominion's good faith efforts to correct the record. The network neatly exemplified the "actual malice" standard that has long been the governing principle for media defamation.

The other track maintains that the nine-figure settlement, eye-popping as it is, is ultimately not much consequence for the giant network, representing less than a fifth of just last quarter's revenues and allowing it to avoid any on-air acknowledgement of its misdeeds. On that front, we agree that this case alone isn't enough of a repercussion for a news operation that actively participated in an attempt to not just misinform viewers but destroy their faith in our democracy. It should be the network's own viewers and advertisers that really hit Fox where it hurts.

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MIKE SMITH
LAS VEGAS NOV 2013

DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/ALAS



'Wrong address' shootings reflect America's rising paranoia

It takes a village to raise a frightened man with hair-trigger impulses and put a loaded gun in his hand. Our village has raised many, and we have armed them spectacularly.

Upstate New York resident Kevin Monahan has been charged with murdering 20-year-old Kaylin Gillis. The young woman was in a car whose driver, looking for a friend's house without the benefit of cellular service to guide the journey, mistakenly pulled into Monahan's driveway.

The local sheriff said Monahan shot at a distant car filled with young people as it was leaving his property. "There was clearly no threat from anyone," he said.

A part of American society, vigorously contested by another part, has concluded that Monahan possessed the mental and emotional balance and moral discernment to be entrusted with firearms. Why, just last week Monahan was the very definition of a good guy with a gun. No one asked whether Monahan was a moral degenerate, a rage-addled misanthrope, a paranoid fool or all that and more. It wouldn't have mattered if they did. Because all such people are permitted—indeed encouraged by powerful American institutions—to buy firearms like candy and stockpile them like gold.

The lesson that gun culture warriors want American parents to learn is simple: If you want your kids to grow to maturity, make sure they and their friends never make innocent mistakes. It's a good rule to live by. Look at what happened to Payton Washington and Heather Roth when they failed to follow it. Police say the Texas high school students were shot earlier this week by Pedro Tello Rodriguez after they accidentally got into the wrong car in a grocery store parking lot. Washington is now in intensive care with damage to multiple organs.

Ralph Yarl's mistake was ringing the wrong doorbell. Here is the New York Times' description of what occurred:

Ralph had made an error common in Kansas City, driving to a house on Northeast 115th Street instead of Northeast 115th Terrace, a block away. He pressed the doorbell and waited outside the front door for what felt like a long time, he told the police later.

Yarl not only rang the wrong doorbell, he did so while Black. The shooter, who came to the door and fired two bullets into the 16-year-old's body, was 84-year-old Andrew Lester. He was White. The North Carolina man accused of shooting a 6-year-old and her parents after their ball rolled into his yard was Black. Gun culture has deep racist roots but its pathologies bloom in every American terrain.

By FRANCIS WILKINSON
Bloomberg Opinion

Francis Wilkinson is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering U.S. politics and policy. Previously, he was an editor for the Week, a writer for Rolling Stone, a communications consultant and a political media strategist.



In the village, gun ownership is a sacred right—"God-given" some say. It's a right that transcends morality, society, even life itself. The problem is not that American gun culture energetically promotes paranoia, violence, murder and suicide. The problem is that people ring the wrong doorbell.

Renisha McBride, for example. She was murdered in 2013 when she knocked on a door after a car accident. That same year, a Wisconsin man murdered his 13-year-old neighbor while the child was taking out the trash. At his trial, his lawyer claimed the murderer had a mental disease, and didn't know what he was doing. It was a plausible defense. It is not, however, an impediment to purchasing semi-automatic firearms in bulk.

The village that raised these shooters, and nurtured them to kill, is where we live. It's Fox News spreading lies and fear day and night. It's the local television news station broadcasting nothing but stories of violent crime and puppy adoptions, devoid of context or complexity. It's the National Rifle Association telling frightened White men that nothing can save them but a "tactical" arsenal. It's the Republican Party passing laws to put more guns on the street, in bars, in cars, in churches, in parks, in schools, in homes and in the hands of the depraved and deranged, and then pretending that gun violence is a product of a "woke" prosecutor in Philadelphia or San Francisco. It's the conservative Supreme Court justices who have manufactured history and law to match the dystopian fantasies of their political allies. It's a gun culture that makes heroes of killers like Kyle Rittenhouse and George Zimmerman.

It takes a village to do all this. And a morally shattered, nihilistic movement that feeds off the fear that it generates. As long as we continue to empower that movement in government and law, we will remain in thrall to its pathology. Ringing the wrong doorbell, entering the wrong driveway, opening the wrong door will be invitations to violence and death.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

History offers Biden sobering lessons as he launches his bid for a second term

At long last, President Joe Biden has made it official that he is running for reelection in what he portrayed as “a generational moment for Americans across the country to stand up and fight for our democracy and freedoms.” But despite the characteristic optimism that pervaded his announcement, the president’s 2024 political prospects are far from ideal.

His job approval is stuck in the low 40s, and he is regarded unfavorably in many states he needs to win. Most Americans don’t want him to run.

Moreover, he may face a prospect that could prove almost as difficult for him as losing—and that is winning. Because he might luck into having Donald Trump as a repeat opponent, the president could win a second term.

But given the second-term records of most reelected presidents back to Thomas Jefferson, that prospect ought to have given him some pause before he decided to make Tuesday’s announcement.

Richard Nixon was nearly impeached and forced to resign. Ronald Reagan became enmeshed in a scandal for selling arms to free hostages. Bill Clinton was impeached for lying about an affair with a White House intern. George W. Bush became bogged down in a war launched under false pretenses and the worst domestic recession in decades.

And though Barack Obama survived his second term without major scandal, policy disaster or recession, congressional Republicans were able to block most of his second-term initiatives.

They’re not the only ones. Both Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson had such difficult full terms after inheriting the office that they decided against seeking reelection because of the prospect they’d lose. Woodrow Wilson overreached his political mandate—and then suffered a debilitating stroke. Jefferson’s was marked by an ineffective, unpopular embargo of warring European nations.

Even Dwight Eisenhower, one of the most successful post-World War II presidents, had a difficult second term in which a sweeping Democratic congressional victory foreshadowed the GOP’s 1960 loss of the presidency.

To be sure, it’s not all been bad for second-term presidents.

Reagan won enactment of a major tax bill and the country’s last bipartisan immigration bill. Clinton worked with congressional Republicans to pass a tax cut bill that led to the first balanced budget in 30 years. Besides maintaining his signature Affordable Care Act, Obama helped reach an agreement to curb Iran’s nuclear program and an international climate change treaty, though Trump revoked both.

Some Democratic strategists believe that, if Trump is again his Republican rival, Biden would not only win but also have the same narrow congressional control as in the first part of his term. That could let him build on previous legislative triumphs and confirm

By **CARL P. LEUBSDORF**

The Dallas Morning News

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more Democratic judges, including to the Supreme Court.

Other Democrats think another Trump nomination could produce an even bigger Democratic triumph.

But those are still optimistic scenarios for Biden, given that the country remains closely divided ideologically and Trump’s tight hold on the Republican electorate would likely ensure him close to the 47% of the two-party vote he got in 2020.

More likely, if Biden does win, it would be by a sufficiently narrow margin that he would be lucky to win one house, let alone two.

Republicans currently hold the House by just four seats, but 14 districts with GOP members voted in 2020 for Biden. A Biden presidential victory could easily flip the House for the third election in the last four.

The Senate is more problematic. Democrats hold a 51-49 majority with the votes of three independents. But almost all key 2024 races are for seats held by Democrats, meaning they’d have to pull another inside straight to win narrow control for the third election in a row.

What would that mean for a reelected President Joe Biden?

If Democrats win the House, they would be able to shape legislation though Biden’s first term has shown that, with a closely divided Senate, compromises are generally necessary.

A Democratic Senate would enable the president to win confirmation of most executive choices like Cabinet members and federal judges, a major priority for the Democrats as they seek to counter the impact of the large number of Trump-nominated conservative judges.

Most important, it would give Biden and the Democrats a realistic chance of winning confirmation of a Supreme Court justice if a vacancy occurs. At present, the court has six Republican nominees and just three Democrats.

But if Biden lost the Senate, he would have a very difficult time. He could probably win confirmation of most Cabinet picks, assuming he makes judicious choices. But the GOP could make it very hard for him to win confirmation of federal judges with partisan backgrounds.

A Supreme Court vacancy could produce a real mess.

The true presidential nightmare would be to lose both houses,

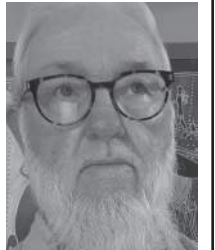
After Earth Day, a Rebirth Day?

LITERARY NOOK

By **JOEY CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.



“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed.”

—Mahatma Gandhi, an Indian lawyer, anti-colonial nationalist, political ethicist.

After Earth Day Duties and Dreams

Well Earth Day came and then it went where did it go and where was it sent thoughtful Earthlings cleaned beaches they’re still here with positive outreaches

Earth Day extends on into Earth Weeks Earth Months and of course Earth Year with our Earth’s Oceans polluted leaks centuries of neglect more coming we fear

Shall we keep in mind and solemnly pray while we exist on the third stone from the Sun as we tilt, rotate, and revolve day after day that Earth will be here whenever we’re done

The Sun and Moon rise help us keep track what we take from Earth we should give back.

forcing Biden to rely on vetoes to block Republican-passed legislation, rather than trying to pass his own agenda. He’d likely concentrate on foreign policy where a president has more leeway. But even there, congressional Republicans could complicate his life.

In seeking a second term at the age of 80, Biden is not only gambling that the political environment will enable him to win—and to govern—but that he will be able to maintain good health.

Second terms are not easy, even under the best of circumstances, and Biden will need some luck to have those.

Literacy is a constitutional right

Literacy has never been more important. Yet, state constitutional rights guaranteeing some version of a right to quality education—a right that must include the provision of the best literacy tools—have largely gone unrealized. Residents across more than a dozen states can and should call on their officials to fulfill their constitutional duty by funding and implementing programs with the greatest odds of producing literate students.

Literacy is more important today than ever before for two reasons: more content and more content creators. More people create more content in more varied forms than ever before—each day presents us all with a historic-amount of content to sort through. Illiterate individuals will inevitably find this task harder and will consequently struggle to navigate a content-saturated world.

As a result of this maelstrom of memes, and tempest of TikToks, and squall of social media posts—literacy today necessitates more than just being able to sound out words—in practice, literate individuals must also develop media literacy. Oxford defines media literacy as “the ability to critically analyze stories presented in the mass media and to determine their accuracy or credibility.” Without this additional skill, any content consumer will be blown around by the bias presented by an article, book, etc.

In theory, more than a dozen states mandate their governments realize the fundamental right to an education. Montana’s constitution includes the right to a “quality education.” California’s constitution identifies education as a fundamental right. State courts in several states have interpreted similar language as ob-

ligating education systems that provide students with the “[o]ral and written communication skills to enable students to function in a complex and rapidly changing civilization.”

These varied expressions of rights to education must include literacy—a prerequisite to most, if not all, formal education. Yet, the vast majority of states still rely on outdated approaches to teaching literacy. An approach referred to as “Science of Reading” when paired with resources to allow teachers and literacy coaches to master and deliver the content has proven to be the gold standard in literacy.

Too few states have formally implemented this approach despite its superiority over its alternatives. When Mississippi jointly required Science of Reading instruction and funded literacy coaches, its previously abysmal rate of childhood literacy jumped. After this change, the state achieved the greatest rate of reading gains in the nation.

Many state courts have shied away from enforcing the right to an education under their respective constitutions. These courts have made these rights into planes without jet fuel—theoretically capable of elevating individuals to their fullest potential, but practically useless. Decisions that have undermined the right to education have turned on judicial concerns of infringing on the legislature’s powers. Yet, not all courts have excused themselves from reminding the legislature of its obligations.

For example, in *McCleary v. State*, the Washington Supreme Court did not refrain from enforcing the right to an education. In that case, the court held that the legislature had not fulfilled its constitutional obligations with respect to education funding and

By **KEVIN FRAZIER**

The Fulcrum

Kevin Frazier will join the Crump College of Law at St. Thomas University as an Assistant Professor starting this Fall. He currently is a clerk on the Montana Supreme Court.



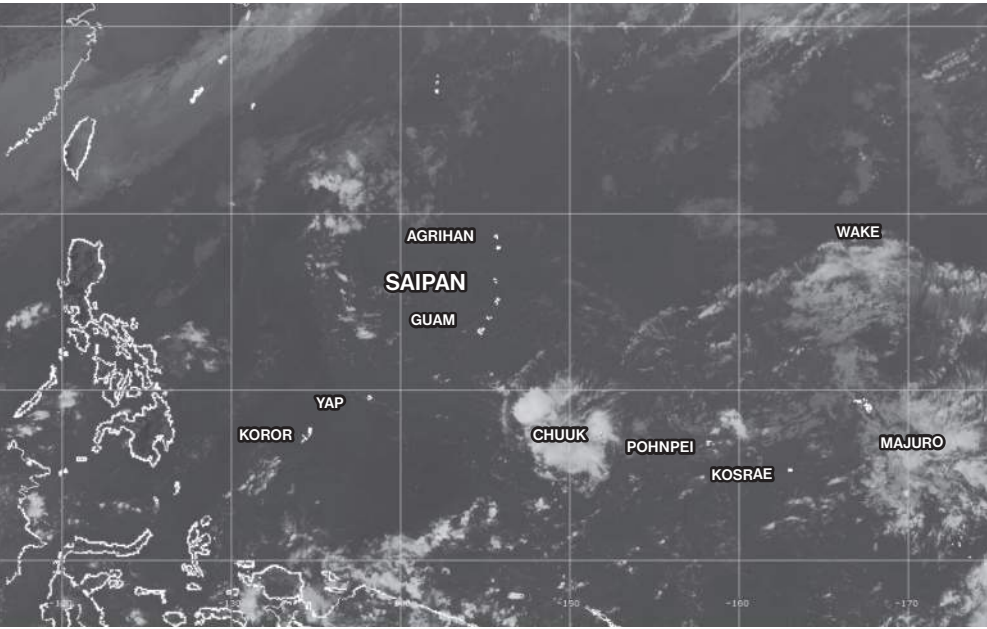
initiated a period of supervision to monitor the legislature’s attempts to remedy their shortcomings.

It appears unlikely that other state courts will reverse their precedent and give wings to the right to an education. As evidenced by recent action in Indiana, state legislatures look to be a more promising source of action on literacy—specifically requiring that all districts use the latest tools and curriculums to assist aspiring readers and writers. The Hoosier State may soon mandate Science of Reading instruction across all districts. Bipartisan support for the mandate indicates that literacy initiatives can unite political adversaries.

Americans must be agnostic as to the source of the enforcement of the right to an education (and, by proxy, the right to receive excellent literacy instruction). But Americans can no longer be indifferent to persistent rates of low childhood literacy. Whether by legislation or litigation, we have a duty to give our children the best shot at becoming literate in a world that demands the evaluation and consumption of mountains of content.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny	
88°	77°	88°	77°	87°	74°	86°	75°	86°	75°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 8:01 AM, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Doppler radar imagery this morning shows showers are very widely scattered in nature, with a slow decrease in overall coverage underway. The latest observational data shows seas of 6 feet with a water temperature at the Ritidian Buoy of 84 degrees.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Isolated Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	86° / 77°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°	
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 77°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:56 AM	6:33 PM
Friday	5:55 AM	6:33 PM
Saturday	5:55 AM	6:34 PM
Sunday	5:54 AM	6:34 PM
Monday	5:54 AM	6:34 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:08 AM	11:31 AM
Friday	-	12:54 AM	12:23 PM
Saturday	-	1:36 AM	1:13 PM
Sunday	-	2:15 AM	2:02 PM
Monday	-	2:51 AM	2:50 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	67° / 57°	
Beijing	Cloudy	70° / 56°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	76° / 73°	
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 71°	
London	Light Rain	57° / 52°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	67° / 46°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	89° / 77°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	75° / 62°	
Miami	Thunderstorms	83° / 74°	
New York	Mostly Cloudy	59° / 49°	
Osaka	Sunny	69° / 52°	
Paris	Light Rain	64° / 57°	
Busan	Sunny	65° / 54°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	73° / 49°	
Salem	Cloudy	77° / 59°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	68° / 49°	
Seoul	Sunny	67° / 42°	
Tokyo	Sunny	71° / 58°	
Washington, DC	Showers	68° / 50°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
2:28 AM	High Tide	1.69	
7:48 AM	Low Tide	1.36	
11:14 AM	High Tide	1.49	
7:17 PM	Low Tide	0.20	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 24, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW9308	3:45AM	7:30AM	4, 7	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily	7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily				

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily	3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun	3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily	3103	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				GUAM TO ROTA			
LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily	2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily	2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily	2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

Saipan Chamber of Commerce office relocates

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce has announced the relocation of its offices to the 2nd Floor of the Marianas Business Plaza effective last April 3.

The SCC's previous location was just two floors above on the 4th floor. The move is aimed at enhancing accessibility and visibility to its members and future-members.

According to executive director Kimberly Camacho, the relocation was a priority in revitalizing the Chamber. "It was definitely something we needed to get done to be able to be more accessible to the members and future-members, on the 4th floor, we were at the way end of the hall and invisible to the public's eye whereas on the 2nd floor, you're able to see our office from the ground floor and you can't miss it with our huge logo displayed out front."



From left, Saipan Chamber of Commerce director Ron Smith, vice president Joshua Wise, secretary Donna Krum, president Joe Guerrero, executive director Kim C. Camacho, and Chamber staff Riley Buenaventura, Tasha Bahillo, and Vanicia Diaz

The new office boasts several advantages, including a larger conference room that

can accommodate up to 15-20 people. Previously, meetings had to be held virtually due

to space constraints. With the new office, in-person meetings can be hosted, allowing

for more robust and meaningful conversations.

"We are excited about the move and the many opportunities we'll encounter going forward. We are thankful for

Chamber members and Marianas Business Plaza for providing a smooth transition of offices within their establishment," Camacho added.

All other forms of communication with the SCC remain the same, and the Chamber welcomes all its members and future members. The SCC remains committed to being a resource and advocate for enhancing the quality of business and life on the Island of Saipan.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower our enterprises as a resource, advocate, and connector for Saipan's private sector. Its vision is to create an island where businesses, family, and community succeed as one.

For more information or to learn how to become a Chamber Member, visit online at www.saipanchamber.com, call 234-7150, or visit the 2nd Floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (Suite 201-A). (PR)

As Biden, McCarthy clash on US debt, what are differences?

WASHINGTON (AP)—They're not quibbling about minor points. There are stark differences in how President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy want to shore up the government's finances.

The Democratic president primarily wants higher taxes on the wealthy to lower deficits; the GOP congressional leader favors sharp spending cuts.

Staring down a fast-approaching deadline to raise the U.S. government's debt limit, they have to find some version of common ground as they jostle in public over the nation's \$31.4 trillion in red ink. But how can they reconcile their competing visions while also achieving the levels of deficit reduction both say they want?

PLAYING CHICKEN

McCarthy wants House Republicans to vote this week on a proposal that would shave an estimated \$4.8 trillion off deficits, mostly through spending caps on "discretionary spending."

By having the House pass his plan, McCarthy hopes to goad Biden into negotiations. Biden is insisting on a "clean" increase in the government's legal borrowing authority. No negotiations on that. But what Biden has offered Republicans is the chance to negotiate about the yearly budget—provided the speaker produces a detailed spending outline.

White House press secretary

Karine Jean-Pierre laid out the administration's thinking at Tuesday's news briefing.

"We're not going to negotiate on something that they should be doing, which is avoiding default," Jean-Pierre said. "But when it comes to the budget, when it comes to how they want to see spending cuts for the American people, we will have that discussion."

Which side will give ground? Will both have to?

On Monday, McCarthy's spokesman, Chad Gilmartin, sent out an email listing quotes from 11 Democratic lawmakers who have suggested talks should start.

"Biden must decide between recklessness or responsibility," Gilmartin wrote.

Kent Smetters, faculty director of the Penn Wharton Budget Model, said the fight over government finances amounts to a game of chicken.

"We know games of chicken tend to lead to extremism," he warned.

WHAT ARE THE OPPOSING PLANS?

This is the simple summary of what McCarthy has proposed: In exchange for voting to raise the government's borrowing authority by \$1.5 trillion or however much is needed until March 2024, discretionary spending would fall back to 2022 levels next year. There would be a 1% cap on future spending increases; tax breaks to address climate change would be gutted; student debt

forgiveness and more generous repayment plans would be canceled, and there would be work requirements for people who get government aid.

That list could change as the legislation gets discussed in the House and McCarthy tries to line up 218 votes for passage. The White House opposes the current iteration, saying it would cause a 22% cut in spending for programs that would hurt schoolchildren, poor families and veterans.

Biden offered his own budget proposal in March that would cut deficits by about \$2.9 trillion over a decade. It would raise \$4.7 trillion from higher taxes on corporations and wealthy households, with an additional \$800 billion in savings from changes to programs. Accompanying that would be \$2.6 trillion worth of new spending. There would be a \$35-a-month cap on insulin prices and restoration of the expanded child tax credit that would give families as much as \$3,600 per child, compared with the current \$2,000.

WHAT WOULD THE PLANS DO TO THE ECONOMY?

The Congressional Budget Office on Tuesday said that McCarthy's plan would cut deficits by \$4.8 trillion over 10 years, but its estimates do not look at the possible impacts on the economy. Private estimates are starting to be released that indicate the U.S. economy would be hurt by

the GOP's proposed spending cuts next year.

Moody's Analytics on Monday released estimates showing there would be 780,000 fewer jobs at the end of 2024 if the House GOP plan became law. Expected growth in the overall economy would slow to 1.6% from 2.25%.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, said his company did not analyze Biden's budget because he views "the clean debt limit scenario as consistent with his policies, particularly in the next 2-3 years."

By way of comparison, the White House estimates growth next year of 2.1% if Biden's budget plan becomes law. The conservative Tax Foundation in its analysis says that Biden's tax hikes would eliminate 335,000 jobs in the long run, an estimate based on multiple years. The Tax Foundation's model says that the higher corporate tax rates in Biden's plan would be the biggest long-term drag on growth.

Why does Moody's Analytics think the Republican cuts hurt the economy? The spending caps would likely cause programs that aid the poor to be slashed. Lower-income households tend to "quickly spend any support they receive from the government," which then circulates through the economy and supports growth and consumer activity, according to the Moody's estimates.

\$1.6B trial starts against utility over fatal 2020 Ore. wildfires

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—A trial connected to a \$1.6 billion class action lawsuit against utility PacifiCorp over the catastrophic Labor Day 2020 wildfires in Oregon started Tuesday in Portland.

The fires in 2020 killed nine people, burned more than 1,875 square miles (4,856 square kilometers) in Oregon and destroyed upward of 5,000 homes and structures.

PacifiCorp is the primary defendant in litigation stemming from the fires, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported.

The Portland-based utility, Oregon's second largest, didn't shut off power to its 600,000 customers during the windstorm. Its lines have been implicated in multiple blazes, one of which started in its California service territory and burned into Oregon.

Jurors in the Multnomah County trial will determine PacifiCorp's responsibility, if any, in four of those blazes: the Santiam Canyon fires east of Salem; the Echo Mountain Complex near Lincoln City; the South Obenchain fire near Eagle Point; and the Two Four Two fire near the southwest

Oregon town of Chiloquin.

The lawsuit no matter the outcome is likely to reshape the way Oregon's electric utilities respond to increasing wildfire risks amid climate change, consistent drought conditions and a spike in the average number of acres burned annually.

Nicholas Rosinia, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, asked jurors to hold PacifiCorp accountable for its failure to shut off power on Labor Day 2020.

"These fires were predictable and preventable and devastated the lives of thousands of Oregonians," Rosinia told jurors. "They had the knowledge, they understood, and they chose to do nothing."

Doug Dixon, an attorney representing PacifiCorp, disputed that the utility's lines caused three of the four fires and most of the resulting damage. He told jurors that PacifiCorp had been on high alert and acted similarly to most other utilities that did not proactively cut power.

"This case is about reasonable precautions that PacifiCorp takes to provide safe, reasonably priced power," he said. "PacifiCorp has and will continue to take its role very seriously."

Nation

2024 race won't be like 2020. That's good and bad for Biden

WASHINGTON (AP)—No honking geese are likely to interrupt his speeches this time.

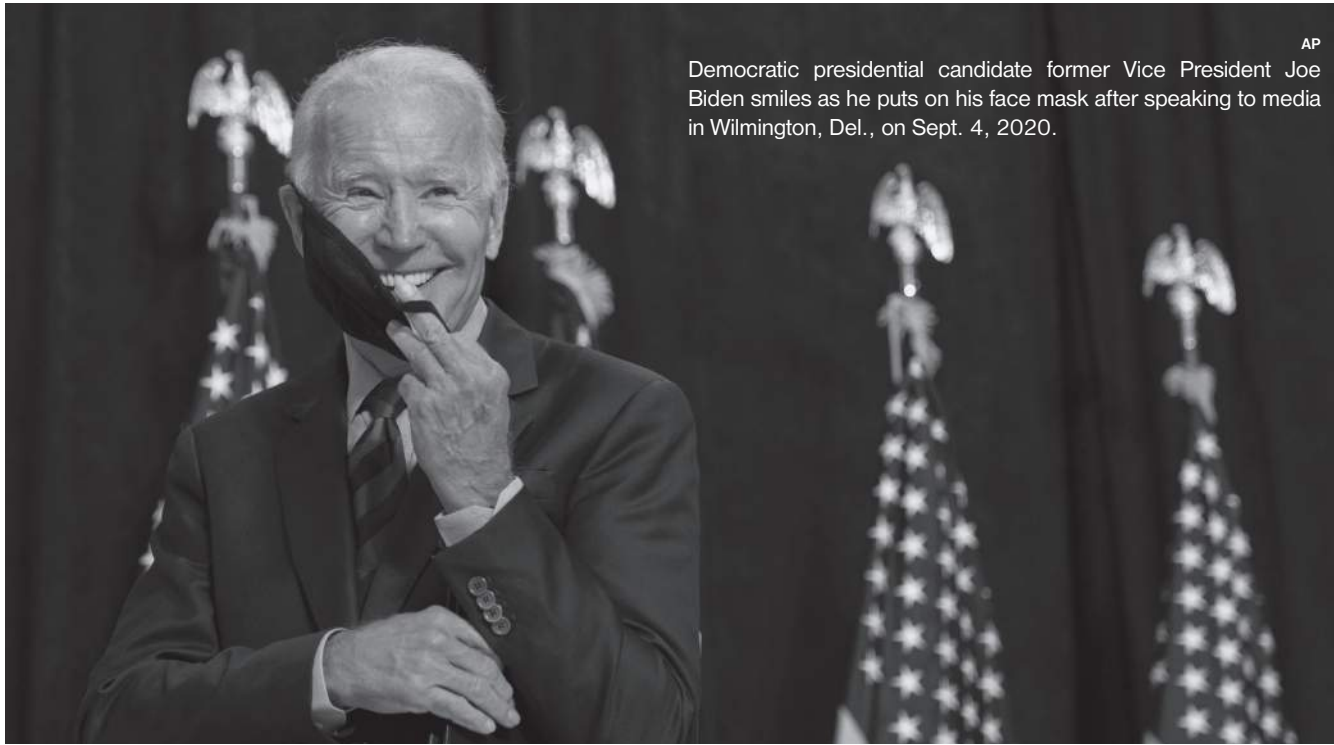
As President Joe Biden seeks a second term, he won't have to depend on glitchy Zoom connections, or deliver remarks in largely vacant theaters with attendees in chairs ringed by circle markings on the floor to ensure enough social distancing. His advisors won't scrutinize the 1918 flu outbreak for clues on pandemic-era voting.

With the country increasingly back to normal, Biden can fly to crowded campaign events on Air Force One, make policy announcements from the Rose Garden and shape not only the presidential race but global affairs with his actions.

Just as the 2024 campaign will be vastly different from the coronavirus-marred 2020 edition, Biden won't be able to hold on to the White House by running in the same way he won it three years ago. Virtual events offered from a basement rec room he converted into a studio in his Delaware home and avoiding travel for months at a stretch won't cut it this time.

A return to more typical campaign rhythms presents both opportunities and potential challenges for Biden.

Lockdowns made the 2020 campaign far less grueling, so much so that Donald Trump frequently accused Biden, now 80, of ignoring voters. But avoiding crowds also often made it harder for Biden to ignite supporter enthusiasm. He also averted the kind of spontaneous interactions with the public and the press that led to memorable gaffes in



AP
Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden smiles as he puts on his face mask after speaking to media in Wilmington, Del., on Sept. 4, 2020.

the past, but sometimes created endearing moments.

"If any presidential candidate benefited from the virtual mold of 2020, it was Joe," said Democratic strategist Nicole Brener-Schmitz. "But he's shown over the course of his presidency that he's perfectly capable of the travel and the rallies and the events and the town halls. There shouldn't be any concern about there being a 'normal' campaign and the American public going, 'Oh no.'"

Biden advisers say that among the many societal changes wrought by the pandemic, campaigning changed too. Voters adapted to using different platforms to engage with politics and candidates. Biden's team also notes that the president is the only successful national candidate so

far in that new environment, and his advisers aim to build on the lessons of 2020, finding novel ways to deliver the most effective message to individual voters.

Biden himself likely won't miss campaigning online. When giving one of his first virtual addresses in March 2020, he lost his place in his prepared remarks and gestured awkwardly to staff standing out of frame. Two months later, as Biden virtually addressed members of the Asian American and Pacific Islanders Victory Fund, a more jarring off-camera distraction came from the Canada geese clustered around a pond in his back yard.

"If you hear them honking away, they're cheering," Biden joked.

Though the production quality improved over time, Biden's

online presentations were often overshadowed by what Trump was doing — so much so that Biden's campaign resorted to creating a short-lived podcast. They also studied balloting during the 1918 midterm elections, when turnout dropped amid the flu pandemic.

Even after he resumed in-person campaigning with social distance circles, drive-in rallies and other small events in battleground states, Biden almost always returned each night to sleep at home in Delaware. This time, it would be Air Force One carrying him back to the

White House or Delaware.

One downside of 2020, aides say, was Biden's inability to meet people on the campaign trail. Even with Secret Service protection, brief one-on-one time will now be possible — but that also increases the likelihood that Biden will say something he regrets.

In December 2019 a man in New Hampshire suggested Biden was too old and also raised questions about the then-candidate's son's overseas business ties. Biden called him a "damned lair" and suggesting a pushup contest — reminiscent

of times his verbal blunders as vice president made some in the Obama White House blanch.

Biden was also at his weakest during in-person campaigning early in 2020. Despite joining the race as the perceived front-runner, he lost the first three Democratic primary contests and only clinched his party's nomination after the pandemic took hold.

He offered a mainstream agenda that appealed to Democratic moderates early, but moved to the left as the general election approached — promising sharp federal spending increases on health care, social programs and the environment while boosting domestic manufacturing and the nation's crumbling infrastructure.

With Democrats controlling Congress through last year, Biden fulfilled many such promises. But he's shifted to the center more recently, which some progressives say will alienate the Democratic base.

"Unless he's hermetically sealed and doesn't want to talk to anybody under 30, he's going to be asked, 'Gee, you said the last time you ran for president dot, dot, dot. What's up with that?'" said Norman Solomon, national director of RootsAction.org, a progressive group that championed the "Don't Run Joe" campaign attempting to convince Biden to forgo seeking a second term.

Jury to deliberate in major Jan. 6 case against Proud Boys

WASHINGTON (AP)—The seditious conspiracy case against former Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrio and four lieutenants went to the jury on Tuesday after dozens of witnesses over more than three months in one of the most serious cases to emerge from the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The jury will begin deliberating Wednesday to decide whether the onetime Proud Boys national chairman and four co-defendants are guilty of seditious conspiracy for what prosecutors allege was a desperate plot to keep President Donald Trump in the White House after the Republican lost the 2020 election.

Prosecutors in Washington have shown jurors hundreds of messages exchanged by Proud Boys in the days leading up to Jan. 6 that show the far-right extremist group peddling Trump's false claims of a stolen election and trading fears over what would happen when President Joe Biden took office.

Defense attorneys say there was no conspiracy and no plan to attack the Capitol. They've

sought to portray the Proud Boys as an unorganized drinking club whose members' participation in the riot was a spontaneous act fueled by Trump's election rage.

A lawyer for Tarrio sought to push the blame onto Trump in his closing argument, telling jurors on Tuesday that the Justice Department is making Tarrio a scapegoat for the former president.

Defense lawyer Nayib Hassan noted Tarrio wasn't in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, having been banned from the capital after being arrested on allegations that he defaced a Black Lives Matter banner. Trump, Hassan argued, was the one to blame for extorting a crowd outside the White House to "fight like hell."

"It was Donald Trump's words. It was his motivation. It was his anger that caused what occurred on January 6th in your beautiful and amazing city," Hassan told jurors. "It was not Enrique Tarrio. They want to use Enrique Tarrio as a scapegoat for Donald J. Trump and those in power."

Tarrio, a Miami resident, was tried alongside four other

Proud Boys: Ethan Nordean, Joseph Biggs, Zachary Rehl and Dominic Pezzola. They could face up to 20 years in prison if convicted of seditious conspiracy, a Civil War-era charge that can be difficult to prove.

Tarrio is one of the top targets of the Justice Department's investigation of the riot, which temporarily halted the certification of Biden's election win.

Trump has denied inciting any violence on Jan. 6 and has argued that he was permitted by the First Amendment to challenge his loss to Biden. The former president is facing several civil lawsuits over the riot and a special counsel named by Attorney General Merrick Garland is also overseeing investigations into efforts by Trump and his allies to overturn the results of the election.

A prosecutor told jurors on Monday during the first day of closing arguments that the Proud Boys were ready for "all-out war" and viewed themselves as foot soldiers fighting for Trump as the Republican spread lies that Democrats stole the election from him.

Trump might use trial docs to scorch witnesses, DA says

NEW YORK (AP)—New York prosecutors have asked a judge to bar Donald Trump from using evidence from his criminal case to attack witnesses, citing what they say is the former president's history of making "harassing, embarrassing, and threatening statements" about people he's tangled with in legal disputes.

The Manhattan district attorney's office filed court papers Monday asking Judge Juan Manuel Merchan for a protective order that would put strict guardrails around Trump's access to and use of evidence turned over by prosecutors prior to trial. That kind of evidence sharing, called discovery, is routine in criminal cases, and is intended to help ensure a fair trial.

Prosecutors want to block Trump from posting evidence to social media or providing it to third parties. They also want

to restrict how he views certain sensitive material, asking that he do so only in the presence of his lawyers — and that he not be able to copy, photograph or transcribe those records.

Trump "has a longstanding and perhaps singular history of attacking witnesses, investigators, prosecutors, trial jurors, grand jurors, judges, and others involved in legal proceedings against him," Assistant District Attorney Catherine McCaw wrote.

That behavior, she said, has put "those individuals and their families at considerable safety risk."

Merchan did not immediately rule on the prosecution's request. McCaw, in her filing, asked him to schedule a hearing on the matter next week.

Email messages seeking comment were left with Trump's lawyers.

Prosecutors first raised con-

cerns about Trump potentially weaponizing the discovery process at his April 4 arraignment on charges that he falsified records at his company as part of a broader 2016 scheme to make secret hush-money payments to bury allegations of extramarital sexual encounters. Trump has denied wrongdoing — or having extramarital affairs — and pleaded not guilty.

With Trump sitting at the defense table just feet away from her, McCaw told Merchan that a protective order was needed to "ensure the sanctity of the proceedings as well as the sanctity of the discovery materials."

At the time, McCaw said prosecutors and Trump's lawyers were close to a joint agreement with many of the restrictions prosecutors are now asking Merchan to impose. Negotiations later broke down, leading prosecutors to seek the judge's intervention.

Asia

US, PH drills show power



A U.S. M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) fires a missile during a Combined Joint Littoral Live Fire Exercise at the joint military exercise called "Balikatan", Tagalog for shoulder-to-shoulder in a Naval station in Zambales province, northern Philippines on Wednesday, April 26, 2023.

SAN ANTONIO, Philippines (AP)—Thousands of American and Filipino forces pummeled a ship with a barrage of high-precision rockets, airstrikes and artillery fire in their largest war drills on Wednesday in Philippine waters facing the disputed South China Sea that would likely antagonize China.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. watched the American show of firepower from an observation tower in the coastal town of San Antonio in northwestern Zambales province — the latest indication of his strong backing of the Philippines' treaty alliance with the U.S.

Marcos has ordered his military to shift its focus to external defense from decades-long anti-insurgency battles as China's increasingly aggressive actions in the South China Sea become a top concern. The shift in the Philippine defense focus falls in sync with the Biden administration's aim of reinforcing an arc of alliances in the Indo-Pacific region to better counter China.

China has angered the Philippines by repeatedly harassing its navy and coast guard

patrols and chasing away fishermen in the waters close to Philippine shores but which Beijing claims as its own. The Philippines has filed more than 200 diplomatic protests against China since last year, including at least 77 since Marcos took office in June.

Sitting beside U.S. Ambassador MaryKay Carlson and his top defense and security advisers, Marcos used a pair of binoculars, smiling and nodding, as rockets streaked into the blue sky from the U.S. High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARS, a multiple rocket and missile launcher mounted on a truck that has become a crucial weapon for Ukrainian troops battling Russian invasion forces.

The coastal clearing in front of Marcos resembled a smoke-shrouded war zone, which thudded with artillery fire as AH-64 Apache attack helicopters flew overhead.

"This training increased the exercise's realism and complexity, a key priority shared between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the U.S. military," Lt. Gen. William Jurney, commander of U.S. Ma-

rine Corps Forces, Pacific, said.

"Together we are strengthening our capabilities in full-spectrum military operations across all domains," said Jurney, the U.S. director for the annual joint exercises called Balikatan, Tagalog for "shoulder-to-shoulder."

About 12,200 U.S. military personnel, 5,400 Filipino forces and 111 Australian counterparts were taking part in the exercises, the largest since Balikatan started three decades ago. The drills have showcased U.S. warships, fighter jets as well as Patriot missiles, HIMARS and anti-tank Javelins, according to U.S. and Philippine military officials.

The ship targeted by the allied forces was a decommissioned Philippine navy warship, which was towed about 18 to 22 kilometers (11 to 14 miles) out to sea.

Smaller floating targets, including empty drums tied together, were also used as targets to simulate a battle scene where a U.S. Marine Corps command and control hub enabled scattered allied forces to identify and locate enemy targets then deliver precision rocket and missile fire.

the continental United States.

Sullivan didn't offer details on the new deterrence efforts ahead of the leaders' announcement, but said that the U.S. is looking to send a clear message to Pyongyang about its increasingly aggressive rhetoric.

"What I will say is that we believe that the statement will send a very clear and demonstrable signal of the United States' credibility when it comes to its extended deterrence commitments to the Republic of Korea and to the people of Korea," Sullivan said, using the formal name for South Korea.

they mark the 70th anniversary of their alliance, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said.

White House officials say Biden hopes to put a particular emphasis on the United States' "iron clad" commitment to deterring nuclear action by North Korea as Pyongyang has stepped up ballistic missile tests, including flight-testing a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile for the first time earlier this month. The recent test is seen as a possible breakthrough in the North's efforts to acquire a more powerful, harder-to-detect weapon targeting

World

Russia's Lavrov warns EU becoming militarized now

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Russia's top diplomat warned Tuesday that the European Union "is becoming militarized at a record rate" and aggressive in its goal of containing Russia.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told a news conference he has no doubts that there is now "very little difference" between the EU and NATO.

Lavrov said they recently signed a declaration, which he said essentially states that the 31-member NATO military alliance will ensure the security of the 27-member EU political and economic organization.

He was apparently referring to a Jan. 19 EU-NATO declaration on their "strategic partnership" which calls Russia's Feb. 24, 2022, invasion of Ukraine "the gravest threat to Euro-Atlantic security in decades."

It calls the present moment "a key juncture for Euro-Atlantic security and stability" and urges closer EU-NATO cooperation to confront evolving security threats, saying this will contribute to strengthening security in Europe and beyond. And it encourages the fullest possible

involvement of NATO members that don't belong to the EU and EU members that aren't part of NATO, but it does not state that NATO will ensure the security of the EU.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has long complained about NATO's expansion, especially toward his country, and partly used that as a justification for invading Ukraine.

The Russian attack, however, sent fear through its other neighbors, and Finland joined NATO earlier this month, seeking protection under its security umbrella after decades of neutrality following its defeat by the former Soviet Union in World War II.

While NATO says it poses no threat to Russia, the Nordic country's accession dealt a major political blow to Putin.

Finland's membership doubles Russia's border with NATO, the world's largest security alliance. Sweden, an EU member, is also seeking NATO membership and is hoping for final approval soon.

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg defiantly declared last week that Ukraine's "rightful place" is in the military alliance and pledged more support for the country on his first

visit to Kyiv since the invasion. The Kremlin responded by repeating that preventing Ukraine from joining NATO is still a key goal of its invasion, arguing that Kyiv's membership in the alliance would pose an existential threat to Russia.

Ukraine is also seeking EU membership and in February its leaders pledged they would do all it takes to back Ukraine. But they offered no firm timetable for talks on joining the EU to begin, as Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had hoped.

Russia's Lavrov was asked whether the war in Ukraine was a miscalculation since Moscow strongly opposed NATO's expansion and the invasion sparked Finland's membership, with Sweden next and Ukraine hoping for a road map to join.

"NATO never had any intention of stopping," the Russian minister replied, pointing to the recent EU-NATO declaration and actions in recent years that saw non-NATO members Sweden and Finland "increasingly taking part in NATO military exercises and other actions that were meant to synchronize the military programs of NATO members and neutral states."

Kenya cult deaths hits 90 as authorities expand operation

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—The death toll at a ranch in coastal Kenya that is owned by a pastor who is accused of leading a religious cult and ordering his followers to starve themselves reached 90 on Tuesday, as the country's interior minister announced an expanded operation at the site.

The new figure came after police exhumed 17 more bodies. The total number of those rescued while starving at the ranch now stands at 34.

The Kenya Red Cross Society's latest figure on the number of missing is 213.

Pastor Paul Makenzi, who heads the Good News International Church, is accused of luring his followers to the ranch near the town of Malindi. He allegedly told them to fast to death in order to meet Jesus before burying them in shallow graves spread across his land. He was arrested after police raided the property earlier this month, and he remains in police custody.

Interior Minister Kithure Kindiki said that the security team will "upscale search and

rescue missions to save as many lives as possible."

"The entire 800-acre (320-hectare) parcel of land that is part of the Shakahola ranch is hereby declared a disturbed area and an operation zone," Kindiki said while visiting the area.

The minister said there would be a turning point on how the country handles threats caused by religious extremism and was looking into another suspected cult in the same Kilifi county.

"We have cast the net wider to another religious organization here in Kilifi. We have opened a formal inquiry on this religious group and we are getting crucial leads that perhaps what was being done by Makenzi is a tip of the iceberg," Kindiki said.

The teams digging at the site have been finding decomposed bodies buried in mass and single graves marked with a cross.

Those believed to be living in mudwalled houses inside the ranch have been fleeing from rescue teams, and mostly those who can't walk or

talk have been rescued so far.

The Mombasa-based Muslims for Human Rights Group called on the government "to consider the option of using aerial surveillance by use of helicopters to rescue more people and make the process quicker."

The autopsies on the bodies are set to begin on Thursday with local media reporting that government morgues in Kilifi are filled to capacity.

These are Kenya's worst recorded cult deaths.

The broadcast regulator, Kenya Film and Classification Board, sounded the alarm in 2017 on radicalization-like content by Makenzi on television. The board's former chairperson, Ezekiel Mutua, told local media that the content was taken off air at the time and law enforcement agencies were notified.

The pastor had been arrested twice before — in 2019 and in March of this year — in relation to the deaths of children. Each time, he was released on bond, and both cases are still proceeding through the court system.

Biden to unveil new efforts to protect S. Korea from nukes

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden will use this week's celebratory state visit by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol to underscore that the U.S. is ready to step up its efforts to deter a North Korean attack on South Korea, according to the White House.

Biden will announce specific new nuclear deterrence efforts as well as a new cyber security initiative, economic investments and an educational partnership, part of an effort to highlight the breadth and depth of the two countries' relationship as

Environment

For Arbor Day, plant a tree resilient to climate change

By JESSICA DAMIANO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trees are long-term investments that often outlive the people who plant them. And with the world's climate changing fast, we now need to consider whether the trees we plant today will be able to withstand the changing conditions in our gardens over the next 30, 50 or even 100 years.

"Things are changing faster than the lifespan of trees," said Daniel Herms, an entomologist specializing in the resiliency of trees at the research branch of the Davey Tree Expert Co., a landscaping firm based in Kent, Ohio.

Over the next few decades, some trees will thrive and others won't, "depending on traits that make them adapt to the changing climate," he said. Those changes include rising temperatures, and rain and drought patterns.

Even some iconic state trees are not considered resilient in their own states, Herms said. For example, California's coastal redwoods "are very dependent on the moisture that comes from fog, and that fog is being reduced."

Other state trees that are vulnerable to climate change in their state, although they could be resilient elsewhere, include, according to Herms:

- Colorado's blue spruce • Idaho's Western white pine • Maine's Eastern white pine • Minnesota's red pine • Nevada's single-leaf pinon • New Hampshire's white birch • New Mexico's pinon pine • Oregon's Douglas fir • Pennsylvania's hemlock • South Dakota's black hills spruce • Utah's blue spruce • West Virginia's sugar maple

If you are growing a tree that has been deemed vulnerable in your area, there's no need to replace it, he said.

"In most cases, it can continue to grow in the residential landscape with a proactive healthcare program," he said. That means making conditions as favorable as possible by providing proper irrigation, insect and disease protection and treatment, and a good nutrition program, all of which help trees tolerate stress better. A credentialed, certified arborist can help.

When selecting new trees, gardeners and landscapers should choose species that are well-adapted not only to the current environment but that can adapt to the new one they'll experience in their lifetime, Herms said.

This is especially important since trees are one of the solutions to climate change.

In addition to producing oxygen, trees provide shade and natural cooling during the summer, especially in cities. "They also reduce stormwater runoff and sequester and store carbon, so they can contribute to climate goals as we get closer to net zero," Herms said, using a term defined by the U.N. as the goal of "cutting greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with any remaining emissions re-absorbed from the atmosphere, by oceans and forests."

Arbor Day, which falls nationally this Friday (April 28) in the U.S., is the annual observance of the importance of planting trees. The date varies in some states and countries based upon the ideal tree-planting date there.

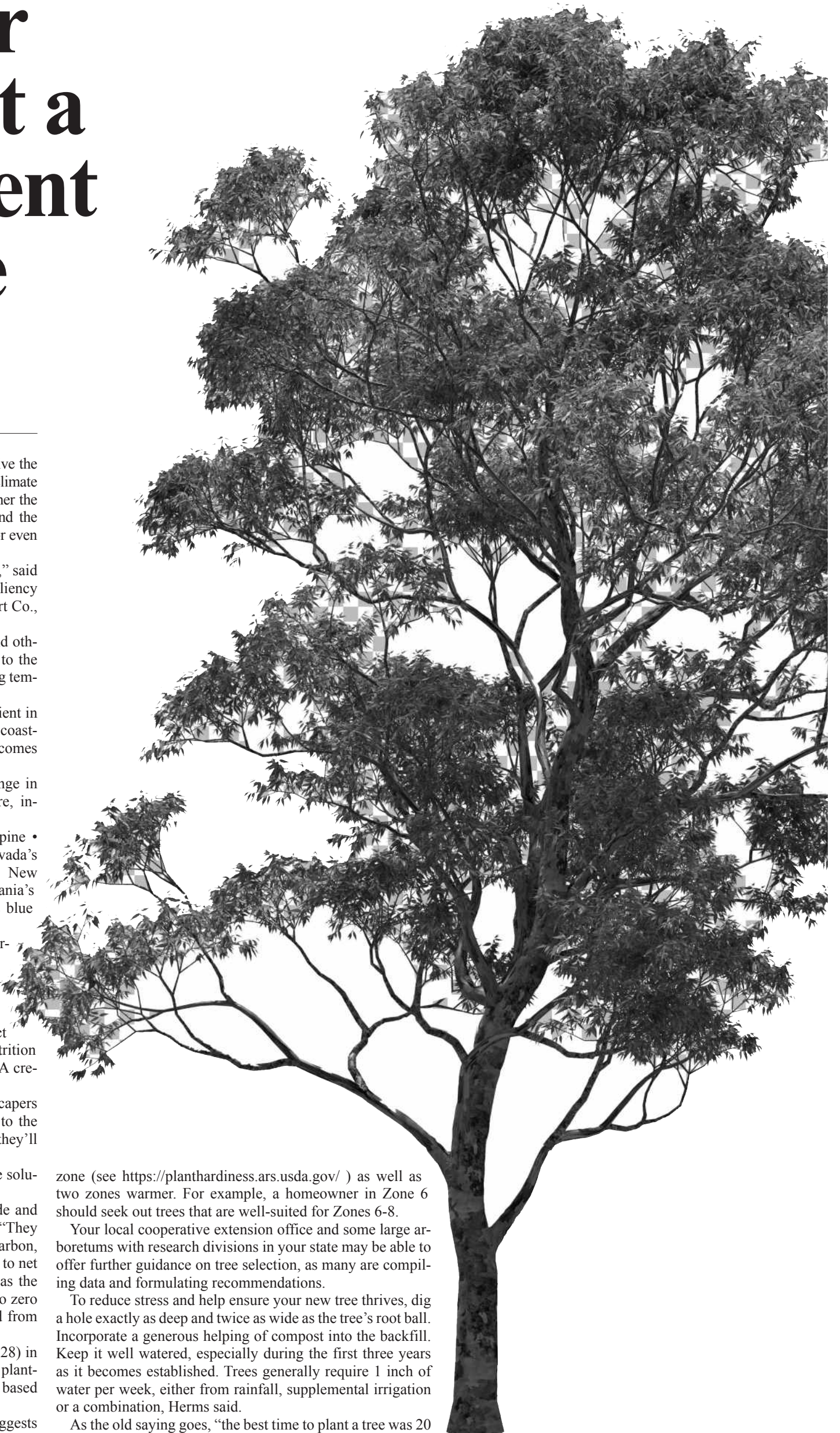
If you're planning to plant a tree this spring, Herms suggests selecting a species that currently thrives in your horticultural

zone (see <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>) as well as two zones warmer. For example, a homeowner in Zone 6 should seek out trees that are well-suited for Zones 6-8.

Your local cooperative extension office and some large arboretums with research divisions in your state may be able to offer further guidance on tree selection, as many are compiling data and formulating recommendations.

To reduce stress and help ensure your new tree thrives, dig a hole exactly as deep and twice as wide as the tree's root ball. Incorporate a generous helping of compost into the backfill. Keep it well watered, especially during the first three years as it becomes established. Trees generally require 1 inch of water per week, either from rainfall, supplemental irrigation or a combination, Herms said.

As the old saying goes, "the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is today."



Life & Style

Melissa McCarthy fronts People magazine's 'Beautiful Issue'

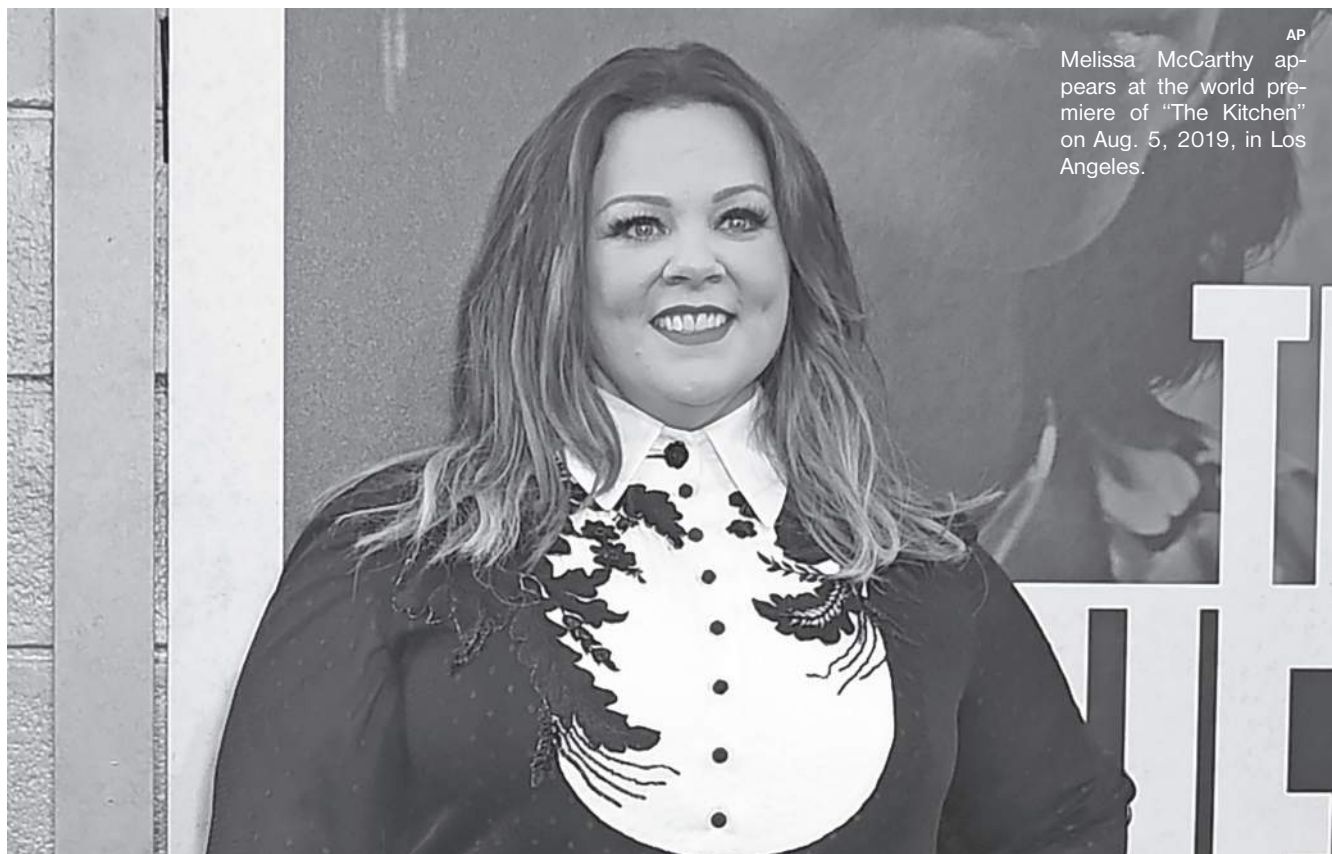
LOS ANGELES (AP)—Melissa McCarthy is out front on this year's People magazine "Beautiful Issue."

The "Bridesmaids" star says being on the cover "felt like it was saying something really lovely to my younger self, to my 20-year-old self. Maybe to other people, too."

People on Tuesday revealed McCarthy's selection and the cover for the issue that hits magazine racks on Friday.

McCarthy, 52, recounted for the magazine her upbringing on a farm in rural Illinois and how she went through a punk phase, complete with a mohawk and blue hair, when she was in high school.

"I was fascinated because when I walked down the street and I looked like that, it was the first time that I'd ever had people kind of make fun of me or say really mean things to me, even adults,"



AP
Melissa McCarthy appears at the world premiere of "The Kitchen" on Aug. 5, 2019, in Los Angeles.

she told the magazine. "I just kept thinking, you don't know me, I didn't do anything to you. It was a real big eye-opener that people are just judging left and right."

McCarthy says it wasn't until her 30s, when she met husband and producing partner Ben Falcone, that she started feeling comfortable with herself. The couple, who have two teenage daughters together, have been married since 2005.

The actor said she wants others to find similar peace of mind.

"When someone's being their authentic self and it hurts no one else in the world... The simplest rule is just be kind," she says.

McCarthy stars as the sea witch Ursula in Disney's upcoming live action "The Little Mermaid," which will be released in May.

Harry Belafonte, activist and entertainer, dies at 96

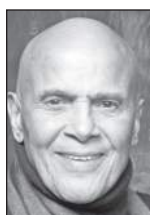
NEW YORK (AP)—Harry Belafonte, the civil rights and entertainment giant who began as a groundbreaking actor and singer and became an activist, humanitarian and conscience of the world, has died. He was 96.

Belafonte died Tuesday of congestive heart failure at his New York home, his wife Pamela by his side, said publicist Ken Sunshine.

With his glowing, handsome face and silky-husky voice, Belafonte was one of the first Black performers to gain a wide following on film and to sell a million records as a

singer; many still know him for his signature hit "Banana Boat Song (Day-O)," and its call of "Day-O! Daaaaay-O." But he forged a greater legacy once he scaled back his performing career in the 1960s and lived out his hero Paul Robeson's decree that artists are "gatekeepers of truth."

Belafonte stands as the model and the epitome of the celebrity activist. Few kept up with his time and commitment and none his stature as a meeting point among Hollywood, Washing-



Belafonte

ton and the Civil Rights Movement.

Belafonte not only participated in protest marches and benefit concerts, but helped organize and raise support for them. He worked

closely with his friend and generational peer the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., often intervening on his behalf with both politicians and fellow entertainers and helping him financially. He risked his life and livelihood and set high standards for younger Black celebrities, scolding Jay-Z and

Beyoncé for failing to meet their "social responsibilities," and mentoring Usher, Common, Danny Glover and many others. In Spike Lee's 2018 film "BlacKkKlansman," he was fittingly cast as an elder statesman schooling young activists about the country's past.

Belafonte's friend, civil rights leader Andrew Young, would note that Belafonte was the rare person to grow more radical with age. He was ever engaged and unyielding, willing to take on Southern segregationists, Northern liberals, the billionaire Koch brothers and the country's first Black president, Barack Obama, whom Belafonte

would remember asking to cut him "some slack."

Belafonte responded, "What makes you think that's not what I've been doing?"

Belafonte had been a major artist since the 1950s. He won a Tony Award in 1954 for his starring role in John Murray Anderson's "Almanac" and five years later became the first Black performer to win an Emmy for the TV special "Tonight with Harry Belafonte."

In 1954, he co-starred with Dorothy Dandridge in the Otto Preminger-directed musical "Carmen Jones," a popular breakthrough for an all-Black cast. The 1957 movie "Island

in the Sun" was banned in several Southern cities, where theater owners were threatened by the Ku Klux Klan because of the film's interracial romance between Belafonte and Joan Fontaine.

His "Calypso," released in 1955, became the first officially certified million-selling album by a solo performer, and started a national infatuation with Caribbean rhythms (Belafonte was nicknamed, reluctantly, the "King of Calypso"). Admirers of Belafonte included a young Bob Dylan, who debuted on record in the early '60s by playing harmonica on Belafonte's "Midnight Special."

House sitter has been snooping around

DEAR ABBY: A close friend takes care of my home when I travel several times a year. It involves picking up my mail, watering my indoor and outside plants and checking through the house for anything that might need attention in my absence. I return the favor for her each time she's out of town. I don't have anyone else near where I live who can do this for me.

The problem is, when she's here, she snoops through my things. I know because I keep things in a certain order (I'm neat and organized), and it's very noticeable when my belongings have been rearranged. It bothers me because it's an invasion of my privacy and just plain wrong. I would never think of doing this in her home. I have no desire to see her personal items.

Over the years of our friendship, this person has become increasingly possessive and clingy to the point that it's uncomfortable. I have overlooked it to avoid hurting her feelings. How do I handle this? Do I continue to lock up confidential paperwork and leave everything else for her to snoop through? If I tell her I'm aware of what she's been doing, I'm afraid she will refuse to help me out any longer.

TRAVELER IN CONNECTICUT

DEAR TRAVELER: There are workarounds for your travel schedule. You could have the post office hold your mail until you return. Living in Connecticut, your outdoor

plants are likely dormant in the winter. Inquire at your local nursery about wicking devices to ensure your indoor plants are sufficiently watered.

Because this "friend" can't resist pawing through your personal things, ask for your key back if she has one (or change the locks on your doors) and tell her kindly that her help is no longer needed. It goes without saying that any financial records should have been under lock and key to prevent prying eyes as soon as you realized they were askew. Please consider it, and when you do, reconsider the friendship.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I've been going to an excellent hairstylist for a year and a half. The problem is she doesn't want me to have color on my hair. She wants me to let my hair go gray. I detest the idea. She keeps insisting it is "so pretty," and she won't let it go. During my last visit, she became almost combative about it. She said she had expected me to stop asking for color by now.

She colors her hair a beautiful shade of red. When I asked her about it, she said that "she had the right because she was born with that color." It is very hard to get a hairstylist who knows how to cut my hair. Why do you think this has become such an obsession with her, and what should I do?

HATES THE GRAY

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR HATES: What you should do is TAKE CONTROL. It is a hairstylist's or cosmetologist's job to give the clients what they want, if it's possible. Tell that nervy woman you do not want her to raise the subject of letting your hair go gray again because, if she does, she will lose you as a client. And then follow through.

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson **Garfield®**

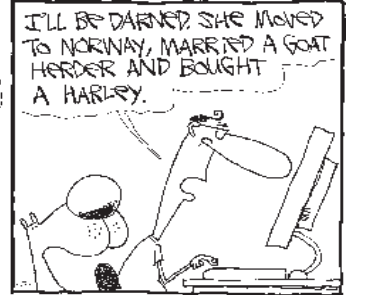
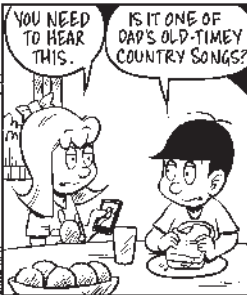
By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset **The Duplex**

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Support-
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recipe
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DOWN

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29 Otto-
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30 Novelist
Brontë
31 Crystal
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33 — pink
35 Name
38 Vegas
opener?
40 Olympic
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43 Marina
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45 Earth
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46 Color-
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48 Kid's
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49 "Not so
fast!"
53 Wall St.
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54 "May-
day!"
55 TV
schedule
abbr.

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterdays answer 4-27

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Emily Rios, 34; Jenna-Louise Coleman, 37; Patrick Stump, 39; Ari Graynor, 40.

Happy Birthday: Put your energy behind your ideas and the changes that will ease stress and give you something to look forward to this year. Overreacting will be the pitfall between you and the happiness you desire. Be honest with yourself and others; it will make it easier to let go of what isn't working for you so you can move on to something more suitable. Your numbers are 6, 13, 18, 24, 32, 38, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Let your imagination lead the way, but don't lose sight of what things cost or what's realistic. Pay attention to self-improvement and veer away from trying to change others. You can have fun without being over the top. Curb your habits and save cash. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't rely on others when the changes you want are up to you. Do your part, choose your path and own the outcome. Speak from the heart and look out for your interests. Protect your reputation, assets and physical well-being from users. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Simplify, downsize and let go of the past. It's a new day; time to reset your goals and focus on what's important to you. You can't change the past, but you can control how you move forward. Be good to yourself. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Put your energy where it counts. Reach out to those who have been there for you in

the past, and you'll get the backup you require. A change of attitude will result in new ideas and the courage to do things your way. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Clear your head before you share your thoughts. Confusion will set in if you let your emotions interfere with what you are trying to accomplish. Expect to meet with stubborn resistance if you are too pushy. Be patient, and you'll get your way. ★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't hesitate to change your mind if something feels wrong. The adjustments may spark emotions but, at the same time, help stabilize your life. Trust your instincts, and you'll figure out what to do next. Don't risk your health or well-being. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Spend quality time with the people who lift your spirits and make you smile. Look for any opportunity to travel, learn or get involved in a partnership that offers growth opportunities. Self-improvement will draw attention, and romance is favored. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Not everyone will agree with your decisions, but feeling comfortable and living with the results are what matters. Be true to yourself and feel good about the decisions you make, and the right people will find you. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be careful who you share information with today. Someone will twist your words if given a chance. Pay attention to relationships and determine who has your back. Avoid joint ventures and shared expenses. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take care of financial matters. Emotional spending won't buy happiness or peace of mind. Someone you care about will disappoint you. Show patience and be a good listener, and something good will transpire. Let home improvement projects occupy your time. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll face many controversies if you share too much with a friend, relative or peer. Spend time developing your plans and working toward your objective rather than trying to win approval from others. Personal goals, improvements and entertainment are favored. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You've got the drive to achieve your goal. A change you want to make regarding your financial situation will happen if you put in the hours and do the work yourself. Pay attention to the details and you'll get good results. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are conscientious, loyal and persistent. You are stubborn and spirited.

★: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ★★: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ★★★: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ★★★★★: Aim high; start new projects. ★★★★★: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

2	3	8	4	6	7	9	5	1
5	1	7	2	3	9	4	6	8
9	6	4	5	1	8	2	3	7
1	2	6	8	9	3	5	7	4
4	7	9	6	5	1	3	8	2
8	5	3	7	4	2	6	1	9
6	9	5	1	8	4	7	2	3
7	4	1	3	2	6	8	9	5
3	8	2	9	7	5	1	4	6

Difficulty: ★★★

4/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	2	8	5	3	6	7	9	4
5	7	3	9	4	8	1	6	2
4	9	6	7	2	1	5	8	3
8	3	5	2	7	9	4	1	6
2	6	4	8	1	3	9	7	5
7	1	9	4	6	5	2	3	8
3	4	7	6	9	2	8	5	1
9	5	1	3	8	4	6	2	7
6	8	2	1	5	7	3	4	9

Difficulty: ★★★

4/26

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

SALZKAMMERGUT LAKES, AUSTRIA Solution: 6 letters

G L R E T A W H S E R F R U S
E O A C L O U D S M K A Y A K
E E S N D R L B O R T S P L I
R C S A D E A N S U R S E P T
U I E N U S D E A G R A S S E
T M E F U S C H L S E E I M R
C A V E E A E A T C S L U U
E R T E E T R E P U L I R U
T O S E E R T T N E D A C I A
I N E T N I E N O N L S K C N
H A R W R P Y T U E K I H E M
C P O T A O B O T R E V I R I
R T F P E E S G N A G F L O W
A Z U E R K N E S H C O L T S
E E S N E T T O R K C O R S E

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Alps, Architecture, Attersee, Boat, Cave, Clear, Clouds, Cruise, Forest, Freshwater, Fuschlsee, Gosauseen, Grass, Hike, Hill, Kayak, Kitz, Krotensee, Lake, Landscape, Meadow, Mondsee, Music, Nature, Ochsenkreuz, Panoramic, Resort, River, Rock, Rural, Sail, Salt, Sound, Spas, Store, Strobl, Sunny, Surf, Swim, Town, Traunsee, Trees, Trip, Wolfgangsee

Yesterday's Answer: Competing

The NEW Volume 70 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

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Nuggets eliminate Wolves 112-109 behind Murray, Jokic



DENVER (AP)—Michael Malone surveyed the scene Tuesday night and wondered where everyone was — not just Denver's fans, but the Nuggets themselves.

"Our team was kind of like the crowd tonight — we were late arriving," Malone said after Nikola Jokic and Jamal Murray helped the top-seeded Nuggets overcome a slow start to eliminate the Minnesota Timberwolves 112-109 in Game 5 of their Western Conference first-round playoff series.

Anthony Edwards, who led Minnesota with 29 points, hit the back iron on a 27-foot 3-point attempt at the buzzer that would have sent the game into overtime.

The top-seeded Nuggets will face the fourth-seeded Phoenix Suns, who eliminated in the Los Angeles Clippers in five games, in the second round, which begins Saturday night in Denver.

Despite Denver being the better seed, Jokic called the Suns "the favorite to win the championship. They have an amazing, amazing group of guys, well-coached." He went up and down their roster, saving special praise for Chris Paul, Kevin Durant and Deandre Ayton. "So, it's going to be a big challenge for us."

Jokic also applauded the Wolves, who were without top perimeter defender Jaden McDaniels (broken hand) and center Naz Reid (broken wrist) for the series and lost Kyle Anderson to an eye injury in Game 4.

"And they still managed to be in every game except Game 1. That was the only game that was an easy win for us," Jokic said. "They did a good job. We were just a little bit better



Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic, right, works against Minnesota Timberwolves center Karl-Anthony Towns during the first half of Game 5 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series Tuesday, April 25, 2023, in Denver.

this time."

Jokic had a triple-double and scored 28 points despite missing 21 of 29 shots, and Murray scored 35 points to help the Nuggets overcome an early 13-point deficit and hand Malone his record 25th career playoff victory for Denver, one more than Doug Moe had.

A rainstorm slowed traffic into downtown Denver and an earlier start than normal had fans streaming into Ball Arena a little late.

"I looked up, there's a lot of empty seats and coaches said, well, the weather's really bad. But the way we played that first quarter was like a regular-season game," Malone said. "And then slowly but surely, I felt Jamal made a couple of shots. And Jamal plays with so much emotion. And I think he got our team going. ... Jamal

just wouldn't quit, you know? And he made big shot after big shot."

Good thing for Denver, too, because Jokic and Michael Porter Jr. were a combined 11 for 39 from the floor and the Nuggets fell behind by 13 in the first quarter, a sluggish start that stumped Malone.

"I couldn't put my finger on it as it was going on," he said. "Was it nerves? Was it the moment? Was it too big for us trying to close out a team? I don't think it was. We just showed up like we weren't playing hard. But it was not the necessary physicality and aggression and intensity that is needed to close the team out."

"And I couldn't believe at halftime we were up by one," Malone added. "I was like, 'Wow! We just played that half. And you look at all the numbers

and the only reason we were up by one was the foul line."

A 15-4 advantage at the free throw line helped Denver inch ahead 48-47 at the break. They finished 32 of 36 from the stripe.

Michael Porter Jr. was held without a basket until his dunk with 10:08 left in the game. Jokic missed eight of his first 10 shots 48 hours after tying his career playoff high with 43 points in a Game 4 overtime loss at Minnesota.

Karl-Anthony Towns added 26 points for the Wolves, Rudy Gobert had 16 points and 15 rebounds before fouling out and Nickeil Alexander-Walker chipped in 14 points.

"Guys were super-engaged and it showed," Wolves point guard Mike Conley said. "And that showed that we're going to fight no matter what."

The Nuggets got 14 points

from Aaron Gordon and Bruce Brown, who was in Edwards' face on the game-tying attempt at the buzzer. Porter scored all eight of his points in the fourth quarter, including a pair of clutch 3-pointers after missing his first five shots from behind the arc.

The Wolves, who avoided a sweep with an overtime win in Minneapolis on Sunday, jumped out to a 25-12 lead before the Nuggets began chipping away.

"We started slow," Murray said, "but once they started talking that woke us up. We locked in. We fought back in the second quarter and then I thought we did a good job executing down the stretch."

SUNS 136, CLIPPERS 130

PHOENIX (AP)—Devin

Booker scored 47 points, including 25 in a spectacular third quarter, to lead the Suns past the Clippers and win the Western Conference first-round playoff series in five games.

The Clippers didn't go quietly, nearly coming back from a 20-point deficit early in the fourth.

Los Angeles had multiple chances to tie in the final three minutes, but could never convert. Durant made a layup to push Phoenix's lead to 134-130 and then made two free throws to put the Suns up six with 31.3 seconds left.

Durant finished with 31 points while Deandre Ayton had 21 points and 11 rebounds. Booker shot 19 of 27 from the field.

Norman Powell led Los Angeles with 27 points while Mason Plumlee scored 20 off the bench.

HAWKS 119, CELTICS 117

BOSTON (AP)—Trae Young had 38 points and drained a long go-ahead 3-pointer from beyond the top of the key with 2.8 seconds left to help Atlanta cap a late comeback and beat Boston.

The victory trims Boston's lead in the first-round playoff series to 3-2 and sends the teams back to Atlanta for Game 6 on Thursday.

John Collins added 22 points for Atlanta, who played without Dejounte Murray, who was suspended for one game for bumping official Gediminas Petraitis with his chest while walking off the court after the end of Game 4.

Jaylen Brown scored 35 points and Jayson Tatum added 19 for the Celtics, who were outscored 37-25 in the fourth quarter.

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

Paolo Banchero became the frontrunner to win Rookie of the Year race from the very moment that he went No. 1 in last year's draft.

And nobody caught him.

Banchero was announced Tuesday night as the overwhelming winner of the top rookie award for this season, after the Orlando forward led all first-year players in scoring and helped the Magic improve from a 22-win last season to a 34-win club that contended for a play-in berth this season.

The former Duke stand-out averaged 20 points per game. He had 15 games of at least 25 points and 40 games of at least 20 points, both the most among rookies this sea-

Orlando's Paolo Banchero wins NBA rookie of the year

son. And he won rookie of the month four times, each of those announcements only further indicating that he was ahead of the field.

He became the third player to win rookie of the year as a member of the Magic, joining Shaquille O'Neal in 1993 and Mike Miller — who represents Banchero — in 2001. Banchero, on the TNT broadcast of the announcement, recalled a conversation he had with Miller on draft night.

"He looked at me and he asked me if I was going to be rookie of the year," Banchero said. "I confidently said yes. It was just a goal I've always had, something I had my eye on from the second I got drafted. I'm glad I was able to do it."

Banchero got 98 of the 100 first-place votes from a panel of writers and broadcasters who cover the league. Jalen Williams of the Oklahoma City Thunder was second and Walker Kessler of the Utah Jazz was third. Kessler got the two first-place votes that Banchero didn't receive.

Banchero is the first No. 1 pick to win the award in the season immediately after getting drafted since Karl-Anthony Towns in 2016; Ben Simmons won the award in 2018, two years after he went No. 1.

Magic coach Jamahl Mosley said one of his biggest takeaways from Banchero's first season was an on-court maturity and willingness to play the right way.

"He had an ability to ad-

just in-game to whatever was asked of him to impact winning," Mosley said.

Banchero freely acknowledges that he's not a finished product, and Mosley said the team wants him to lock in on certain areas over the offseason.

"I think there's so many ways in which he can grow," Mosley said. "I think a lot of times rookies will come in and they'll try to do everything. The biggest talk with him is just to have a focus on one or two pieces for the summer, where he can improve in certain areas — because he's going to work. I don't think that's going to be any question whatsoever."

In the final chapter of his season-long rookie diary for

The Associated Press, Banchero also detailed some of the ways he wants to improve over the coming months.

"I want to be more consistent, more dangerous from 3-point range next season," he said. "There were stretches during this year where I shot the ball well. I just need to find the consistency. I think expanding my range in Year 2, then just getting in best shape I possibly can — I think I was in good shape this year, but just want to take it to another level. To get to where I want to be, everything's just going to have to be kicked up a notch. And I'm looking forward to that."

Banchero becomes the sixth person to receive one of the NBA's top individual awards so far in this award

season, following the reveals of Memphis' Jaren Jackson Jr. as defensive player of the year, Sacramento's De'Aaron Fox as the inaugural winner of the clutch player award, Kings coach Mike Brown as a unanimous pick for coach of the year, Boston's Malcolm Brogdon as sixth man of the year and Utah's Lauri Markkanen as the league's most improved player.

That only leaves the biggest individual prize of all — MVP.

Two-time reigning MVP Nikola Jokic of Denver is a finalist again, along with Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo and Philadelphia's Joel Embiid. The NBA has not said when the MVP trophy will be handed out.

The All-NBA, All-Rookie and All-Defensive teams also have yet to be revealed.

Garcia, Astros hand Rays 1st home loss of season, 5-0



ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.

(AP)—Luis Garcia scattered three hits over six innings and the Houston Astros ended the Tampa Bay Rays' 14-game, season-opening home winning streak, 5-0 on Tuesday night.

Only three teams had a longer run than the Rays, who were shut out for the first time this season and fell to 20-4 overall.

Garcia (2-2) struck out seven, walked two and allowed just one runner to reach scoring position.

Tampa Bay entered outscoring its opponents 157-64. The Rays were held homerless for the second consecutive game after going deep 48 times during an MLB-record 22 straight games with at least one homer to begin a season.

Mauricio Dubón doubled in the fifth to extend his hitting streak to 19 games and scored to start a five-run inning off Drew Rasmussen (3-2).

REDS 7, RANGERS 6

CINCINNATI (AP)—Jonathan India hit a go-ahead, two-run single to cap a six-run eighth inning, and Cincinnati rallied from a 6-0 deficit to beat Texas.

Cincinnati won by the same score on Monday night, rallying from a 5-1 deficit.

Nick Senzel had two RBI singles, one in the seventh for the Reds' first run and another with two outs in the eighth that made it 6-3. Pinch-hitter Jake Fraley followed with a two-run double against Ian Kennedy (0-1), and India's single off Kennedy completed the rally.

Reiver Sanmartin (1-0) worked a scoreless eighth, and Alexis Díaz pitched the ninth for his second save in two nights.

GIANTS 5, CARDINALS 4

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Blake Sabol hit a game-ending two-run homer in the ninth inning and San Francisco Giants rallied past St. Louis.

With two outs and a runner on second, Sabol sent Ryan Helsley's 1-2 offering over the wall in center field for his first career walk-off homer. Helsley (0-2) blew his third save of the year.

Mike Yastrzemski had an RBI double earlier in the ninth and homered in the fourth for the Giants, who have won four straight.

Sean Hjelle (1-0), the eighth San Francisco pitcher, worked a scoreless ninth.

DODGERS 8, PIRATES 7

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Chris Taylor hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the eighth inning against Colin Holderman

(0-1) as Los Angeles rallied from a five-run deficit to beat Pittsburgh.

The Pirates' seven-game winning streak ended. It was their longest since an 11-game run in 2018.

Yency Almonte (2-0) struck out two in a scoreless seventh and Shelby Miller sent the side down in order in the ninth for his first save in the majors.

Andrew McCutchen hit a three-run homer in the fourth to put Pittsburgh ahead 7-2.

RED SOX 8, ORIOLES 6

BALTIMORE (AP)—Jarren Duran hit a grand slam in the third and Boston withstood a five-run ninth inning by Baltimore as the Orioles' seven-game winning streak ended.

The Red Sox led 8-1 heading into the bottom of the ninth before the Orioles rallied with a leadoff homer by Gunnar Henderson and a one-out grand slam by Cedric Mullins. Kenley Jansen came on and retired the final two hitters for his sixth save.

Corey Kluber (1-4) pitched six innings and won for the first time in 10 starts, a drought that dated to last season when the two-time Cy Young winner was with Tampa Bay.

Kyle Bradish (1-1) lasted only 2 1/3 innings, giving up seven runs.

TWINS 6, YANKEES 2

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Joe Ryan became the first five-game winner in the major leagues this season, Byron Buxton and Trevor Larnach hit two-run homers in the sixth inning and Minnesota clinched its first season series against New York since 2001.

Ryan (5-0) joined Jerry Koosman in 1979 as the only Twins pitchers to win their first five starts since the franchise moved to Minnesota for the 1961 season. Ryan allowed two runs—one earned—and seven hits in seven innings with seven strikeouts and no walks.

New York has lost three straight for the first time this season and four of five. Minnesota has won four of six games against the Yankees this year heading into their last meeting on Wednesday.

Nestor Cortes (3-1) surrendered four runs — three earned — in five innings for the Yankees, ending a streak of 16 straight starts allowing three runs or fewer.

BLUE JAYS 7, WHITE SOX 0

TORONTO (AP)—José Berrios struck out a season-high nine over seven innings, Danny Jansen homered twice and Toronto extended Chicago's losing streak to six.

Berrios (2-3) allowed four hits—all singles—and walked one in his second straight seven-



AP

Houston Astros relief pitcher Ryan Pressly (55) celebrates with catcher Martin Maldonado after closing out the Tampa Bay Rays during the ninth inning of a baseball game Tuesday, April 25, 2023, in St. Petersburg, Fla.

inning outing. Nate Pearson and Anthony Bass finished with hitless relief as the Blue Jays won for the 14th time in 20 games.

Kevin Kiermaier hit a two-run triple, and George Springer had three hits and drove in a run for Toronto.

Mike Clevinger (2-2) allowed a season-high six runs and seven hits in five innings.

NATIONALS 5, METS 0

NEW YORK (AP)—Josiah Gray pitched six overpowering innings and batterymate Keibert Ruiz homered as Washington beat New York.

Luis García had a two-run double and Joey Meneses added a pair of RBI singles among his three hits.

Finally given some offensive support in his fifth start of the year, Gray (1-4) struck out nine and walked one. Ruiz's solo homer to right-center off José Butto (0-1) in the second marked the first run Washington scored with Gray on the mound this season.

The Mets were blanked for the fourth time this year.

CUBS 6, PADRES 0

CHICAGO (AP)—Justin Steele pitched three-hit ball into the sixth inning in his fourth straight win, and Chicago beat San Diego.

Yan Gomes had four of Chicago's seven hits, including a two-run homer off Blake Snell (0-4) in the second.

Steele (4-0) struck out five and walked two in 5 1/3 innings, improving to 5-1 with a 1.07 ERA in his last 12 starts dating to July 22.

BRAVES 7, MARLINS 4

ATLANTA (AP)—Charlie Morton pitched seven strong innings, Ozzie Albies homered twice and Atlanta beat Miami.

Morton (3-2) allowed three hits and one run with two walks and nine strikeouts on a season-high 108 pitches.

Yuli Gurriel hit an inside-the-park homer in the ninth for Miami. Bryan Hoewing (0-1) gave up four runs in 3 2/3 innings in his second career start.

ROCKIES 5, GUARDIANS 1

CLEVELAND (AP)—Colo-

rado's Charlie Blackmon hit his 40th leadoff homer and hit an RBI double off Cleveland's Peyton Battenfield (0-2) in a three-run second that built a 4-0 lead.

Brenton Doyle had his first three major league hits and stole two bases as the Rockies clinched their first series win this season. Colorado, a National League-worst 8-17, lost 11 of 12 before winning its first two games of the three-game series by a combined 11-1.

Ryan Feltner (2-2) allowed an unearned run and five hits over six innings.

MARINERS 5, PHILLIES 3

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Jarred Kelenic homered among his three hits, Teoscar Hernández also went deep and Seattle opened a nine-game trip by beating Philadelphia.

Edmundo Sosa homered for the defending NL champion Phillies, who had won three in a row.

Marco Gonzales (2-0) gave

up one run on four hits in five innings. Paul Sewald gave up a run in the ninth, but recorded his seventh save.

Bailey Falter (0-4) allowed four runs, three earned, in six innings.

TIGERS 4, BREWERS 3

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Kerry Carpenter hit a three-run homer as Detroit beat Milwaukee to snap a four-game skid.

Detroit scored all its runs in the second inning against Eric Lauer (3-2). The Brewers have lost three straight for the first time this season.

Mason Englert (1-1) got the win with 2 2/3 innings of scoreless relief. Jason Foley got the last four outs for his second save.

ROYALS 5, DIAMONDBACKS 4

PHOENIX (AP)—Scott Barlow got Christian Walker to hit into a game-ending groundout with runners on second and third, and Kansas City beat Arizona for its second win in 11 games.

Brady Singer (2-1) rebounded from three poor starts, allowing one run in six innings, and Barlow got the last five outs for his third save. The Royals tied their season high with 14 hits.

Corbin Carroll was a home run shy of the cycle for Arizona and stole two bases.

Ryne Nelson (1-1) gave up four runs and 11 hits in five innings.

ANGELS 5, ATHLETICS 3

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Brandon Drury had a two-run triple as Los Angeles scored four runs in the first and held on to beat Oakland.

Mike Trout went 2-for-4 with a double and Shohei Ohtani had two stolen bases for the Angels.

Griffin Canning (1-0) allowed three runs in five innings while striking out seven.

Mason Miller (0-1) gave up four runs in four innings. The A's have lost 10 of 12.

Jets GM: Getting Rodgers is 'historic' trade for franchise



FLORHAM PARK, N.J.

(AP)—General manager Joe Douglas kicked off the New York Jets' pre-draft news conference by having a young fan answer the first few questions from reporters.

Kyle Stickle, a Make-A-Wish recipient from Ghent, New York, was sitting between Douglas and assistant GM Rex Hogan when he was asked who the 15th overall pick by his favorite team should be.

"I mean, we definitely don't need a quarterback," 13-year-old Kyle said, smiling.

You've got that right, kid.

The Jets agreed on a deal Monday to acquire Aaron Rodgers from the Green Bay Packers, a franchise-altering move that brings the four-time NFL MVP to a team that has the league's longest postseason drought at 12 years.

It came more than six weeks after the 39-year-old Rodgers said during an appearance on "The Pat McAfee Show" on YouTube and SiriusXM on March 15 he intended to continue his playing career — and for the Jets.

Douglas called it an "honor" to have a player of Rodgers' caliber to want to play for the franchise and credited the culture coach Robert Saleh has cultivated during his two-

plus seasons with the team.

Negotiations went on for several weeks between Douglas and Packers GM Brian Gutekunst before the sides agreed on terms.

"Obviously, a long time in the making," Douglas said. "There's still some i's to be dotted and t's to be crossed to ultimately finalize everything, but it was a lot of conversations with Brian. ...

"I can't thank him enough for the open dialogue we've had and ultimately being able to get what we feel is a historic trade for this franchise."

Rodgers posted a farewell to Green Bay on Instagram Tuesday. The post was accompanied by 10 photos from his

Packers tenure.

"I'm not sure it's possible to fully express the gratitude that I have to the (at)packers, our incredible fans, the state of Wisconsin, the thousands of players that I crossed paths with, the incredible men and women who work for the organization, and the amazing people who I got to meet along the way, in one post with 10 pictures, but I hope you read this and feel my heart and soul, filled with love, joy, and peace about my time in green and gold," Rodgers said. "I grew up in Green Bay, drafted at 21, fell in love with the game, met some lifelong friends, and take with me memories that will last a lifetime."

Hagu La'mun rallies against Redmen, 14-13



LEIGH GASES

Hagu La'mun's first baseman Ben Camacho gets Redmen batter Joe Quitugua out during their game in the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League at the DanDan Softball Field last Sunday.

By **LEIGH GASES**
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Hagu La'mun rallied in the last three innings to win against the Redmen, 14-13, in the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League at the DanDan Softball Field last Sunday.

The Redmen were red in the face after losing their fourth inning six run lead as Hagu La'mun put the ball to lumber in the fifth inning.

Hagu La'mun chipped away at the lead with a four-run inning that started with a lead off walk, then an RBI

double by Tim Wesley, followed by a single, then another RBI double by Dennis Cruz. He then ran home after a double by Glen Camacho. Camacho also had a two-run home run in the third inning with their team scoring four in that inning.

In the sixth inning, the Redmen all flew out on pop-ups and reached base just once after only a one run fifth inning for a 12-9 game. The Redmen were still in the lead, but Hagu La'mun had fight left in them and scored three in the sixth to tie it up, 12-12.

With one more chance to lengthen the lead and win, the Redmen could not capital-

ize and scored just one run in the last inning. Hagu La'mun ended up with two more and scooped the win from under their noses, 14-13.

Sufa 10, Tutturamz 5

Team Sufa doubled the runs of Tutturamz for a 10-5 game.

Sufa had a big fourth inning as they scored seven consecutive runs. In between, Pat Deleon Guererro hit a whammy three RBI home run.

Tutturamz's bats were silent for the most part and scattered their five runs over only three innings. They scored two in the third, one in the fourth,

and two in the fifth.

Momma Charo 13, Wazzup 12

Momma Charo said goodbye to Wazzup in a close final of 13-12.

Momma Charo had an early lead as they scored all their runs in the first three innings. It was unfortunate that Wazzup could not muster up one more run because Momma Charo's lineup was shut down until the game ended.

Wazzup had three home runs—one by Derek Aguon, Joe Lizama, then Joe Terjale—but were wasted as it wasn't enough to outperform

Momma Charo's 13 runs.

Momma Charo's Derek Samamoto and Jay Tilipao had home runs of their own in their six run second inning.

Peleliu 19, Man Amigos 14

Peleliu seems to be getting the hang of it as they won again, this time against Man Amigos, 19-14.

Home runs by Peleliu were made in the first inning by Cartfield Sablan and Ben Hocog; they were in the lead by two runs through the sixth inning and came the last inning, their lineup blew up

again with eight runs.

Man Amigos' redemption came up short as they could only bring in five runs in the last inning for a 19-14 final score.

Asahi 17, Aimeliik 1 Time 4

Asahi beat Aimeliik 1 Time in a run-ruled mercy game, 17-4.

The game ended early and after just four innings as Asahi pelted Aimeliik with run after run. Aimeliik, despite Tyler Germance's two-run home run in the third inning, could not keep up with Asahi and fell with another loss.

By **LEIGH GASES**
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REPORTER



MP United Football Club doubled Tan Holdings Football Club's score for a 6-3 game in Week 10 of the TakeCare NMIFA Youth Spring League 2023 last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koberville.

Ian Song from MPU drew first blood after a quiet 17 minutes in the first half. Anthony Bergancia of Tan Holdings replied with a shot of his own in the 23rd minute.

It was an even match throughout as both sides could not find the net until Tan Holdings' Emerson Brillo broke through in the 32nd minute.

MP United doubles Tan Holdings, 6-3

From then on, it was a free for all for MPU as Song scored his second goal, followed by two goals from Cody Shimizu for a 5-2 game. Their sixth goal was made before Tan Holdings could score their third goal in the 80th minute.

Kanoa FC 7, Matansa 1

Kanoa Football Club out goaled Matansa, 7-1.

A first half shot in the 12th minute was the only goal by Matansa from Jayson Bisek.

Kanoa's Paul Lizama scored a hat-trick plus one more in the 8th, 22nd, 57th, and 71st minute.

Teammates Tyler Omelau, Sean Gil, and Yeonsoo Kim contributed the team's three other goals.

Top seed Kanoa is facing off with No. 3 MPU in the semifinals on May 6; after, No. 2 seed Tan Holdings is going against number 4 seed Matansa. The finals are scheduled for May 13 at 8pm.

17U GIRLS 8X8 SUFC 21, Paire FC 2

The Southern United Football Club 17U girls have put up big numbers in their last couple of games—this time, blowing out Paire FC, 21-2.

Pia Newakl bagged a game high with goals; Summer Manahane racked up six goals; Rosie Saralu had four; Rizza Relucio kicked in two; and Brienne Echalicó scored one.

The two goals from Paire

were made by Martha Culp in the 12th minute and Tsubakiko Joab in the 50th.

Kanoa FC 7, MPU FC 1

Kanoa won a lopsided 7-1 game against MPU FC.

The only goal from MPU came in the second half by Irin Chung after Kanoa scored all their goals already.

Kanoa's goals were made by Elikristiana Iglesias, two by Deseha Mendiola, two by Beatrice Gross, and another two by Ye Lynn Ha.

In the championship tournament, Shirley's and Paire will face off on April 29; SUFC will take on MPU FC right after; on May 6, winner of the Shirley's-Paire game will then challenge Kanoa. The finals are scheduled for May 13.

HOLLYWOOD

From Page 20

"First of all, I want to thank the Lord for keeping me and the other riders safe. I also want to thank my beautiful wife, Monica, and our kids, who are my No. 1 supporters, my parents who continue to support and push me, but also, make sure I do it safely, and my in-laws who took care

of our kids while we were away. And I can't forget Team Saipan and Team Guam."

The 40th Smokin' Wheels was the toughest race he's ever been involved in, admitted Camacho, as he went up against international riders.

"Hopefully, within the next couple of years, we can have such an event as big as this and be able to invite international riders as well."

STAY

From Page 20

winners are Johanna Henzon and Marivic Dunlop, with Elizabeth Culp and Tomie Castillo in second place. In a tough match up, the game ended up in five sets. (15-9, 15-6, 15-5, 15-12, 15-5.)

The men's doubles 3.0 first place went to J.R. Austin and

Ray Austin in three sets, 15-13, 15-13, 15-4.

The men's doubles 3.5 was dominated by Alcorn and Ernie Henzon with Mike Manalang and Roy Pangelinan in second place. They won in four sets 15-3, 15-7, 15-7, 15-8.

The last matchup were the mixed doubles 3.5. Dunlop and Pangelinan bagged first place after three sets, 15-5,

15-7, 11-6. Second place went to Chelsea Henzon and Asuncion.

PFNMI president Dr. Nelson Krum said that the tournament was "a resounding success with over 40 contestants and lots of observers. My heartfelt thanks goes out to all of the volunteers that pulled together to create such a wonderful event. Also, a huge thank you to all of our sponsors! We had wonderful

gifts for all the players."

As the federation nears its third anniversary, it has grown to over 175 members.

Their next event will be a Scott Moore pickleball clinic toward the end of May.

Pickleball is a cross between tennis, ping-pong, and badminton. You can watch to learn more or join their daily night games at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

NMI

From Page 20

at events and see world-class badminton.

NMBA vice president Nate Guerrero, on the other hand, said the two events are great opportunities not only for NMI residents to witness high-level games anew, but also for the islands' players themselves, as they can also enter the two tournaments.

"Our players are looking forward to the experience. We've played against representatives from the Oceania and Pacific during the Mini Games and we learned a lot from the competition. This time, it's going to be a different set of players and skill lev-

el, so we are excited to challenge them," Guerrero said.

The Marianas Open and Saipan International are classified as International Challenge, which is one of the events under the BWF World Ranking system. The other ranking events are World Championship, World Tour Finals, Super 1000, Super 750, Super 500, Super 300, and Super 100. Besides the world ranking points that athletes will need to qualify for the 2024 Paris Olympics, they will also battle for the \$15,000 total prize money per each tournament.

This is the first time in the history of Badminton Oceania that back-to-back Challenge events will be played in the same country and same

venue—the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. The highly improved facility was the same venue for the Mini Games and will be welcoming back badminton players and visiting technical officials from the Badminton Oceania and the coaches/team managers of the participating countries.

"At this early stage, we would like to ask for the support of our community in welcoming our visitors from around the world. Teams that participated in last year's Pacific Mini Games were truly grateful for our island hospitality and I am sure the delegates for the two badminton tournaments we will be hosting are excited to have the same experience," Tolentino said.

Sports tourism

Meanwhile, Jerry Tan, president of the Northern Marianas Sports Association, which manages the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium and other facilities at the Oleai Sports Complex, is pleased to have major competitions taking place in the NMI after the successful hosting of the Mini Games.

Besides the two badminton Olympic qualifiers, Oceania Cup and Marianas Championships in athletics are also scheduled at the OSC track and field facility in June, while the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium may also host the Micronesian Basketball Tournament in July this year.

"The NMSA is excited to have our national federations holding not just local compe-

titions, but also regional and international tournaments. These high-level competitions are good for our athletes, coaches, and technical officials, as they continue to work hard to improve their skills and represent the NMI well in these events," Tan said.

The NMSA president is hoping that more NMSA-member federations will get a chance to bring regional and international competitions to the NMI and support the Marianas Visitors Authority's efforts in promoting sports tourism on the islands. These types of events have a significant impact on the local economy as visiting athletes, coaches, and other members of the delegation spend on hotels, restaurants, car rentals, facilities, and other

business establishments. Late last year, MVA brought in professional baseball players for a clinic at the Francisco "Tan Ko" M. Palacios Baseball Field and to play golf at various courses. Early next year, the MVA is looking at having a pro baseball team conduct a month-long winter training at the same facility.

"As we continue to maintain and improve our sports facilities, we hope to provide our athletes and the rest of the NMI community safe and better venues for competitions and health and wellness and related activities. The sports facilities can also be utilized to attract visiting sports groups that are looking for venues for training and other activities," Tan said. (PR)



Nuggets eliminate
Wolves 112-109
behind Murray,
Jokic.

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune Sports

Hagu La'mun rallies
against Redmen,
14-13.

PAGE 19



20 THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

'Hollywood' tops ATV Enduro race

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Christian "Hollywood" Camacho was a blockbuster hit in the 40th Smokin' Wheels after teaming up with Guam's James Lujan to top the ATV Enduro race last Sunday, April 23, at the Guam International Raceway.

The 38-year-old and Lujan completed 35 grueling laps in 2:04:17.417 to beat the tandems of George Santos and Pierre Banes (2:05:04.598) and Tatsuhiko Hosoda and Bob Bucek (2:04:28.455).

"I partnered up with one of Guam's top riders, James Lujan, for the endurance race. Since Japan's top pro riders partnered up, we figured why not make it One Marianas and challenge them. It paid off as we both knew when to switch off and push where we needed to push," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune* in a social me-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Christian "Hollywood" Camacho (aboard his 2019 YFZ450R) poses with Guam's James Lujan after the duo topped the ATV Enduro race of the 40th Smokin' Wheels last Sunday at the Guam International Raceway.

dia message.

He said the Enduro track was very challenging since there was nothing like that on Saipan to practice on. The 40th Smokin' Wheels was also the first time Camacho aboard his trusty 2019 YFZ450R competed off-island in motocross.

"The toughest part of the race was that the track kept changing. Each rider had their lines and would mess up my lines. I got buckled a couple of times and almost flew off my bike, but I held on tight and was able to save what would've been a crash."

Camacho said he and Lujan's win in the ATV Enduro wouldn't have been possible if it hadn't been for their excellent pit crew.

"They are what got us in and out of the pits. Even the MRA president was getting his hands dirty just to get us out as quickly as possible," he said.

Camacho then thanked his wife, parents, and the Marianas Racing Association board and membership for making their trip to Guam and competing in the 40th Smokin' Wheels possible.

See HOLLYWOOD on Page 19

Stay Out of the Kitchen pickleball tourney held

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER



The Pickleball Federation of the Northern Mariana Islands held its Stay Out of the Kitchen Pickleball tournament and Chili Cookoff last Friday and Saturday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Friday night lights started off the first events of the tourney which were the men's singles and women's doubles.

On Saturday, the men's doubles and mixed doubles were held with the chili coo-

koff as the finale.

Guam's Dereck Alcorn won first place after three sets against Richard Asuncion in the men's singles open division. The first set was 15-11, with the second set a much closer 16-14, and a blowout third set, 8-0.

Third place was Christopher King and fourth place was Charlie Cheng.

In the women's doubles 3.0, Melanie Ward and Ying Gao, came out with the first place win against Lori Hill and Rachel Sun. They won a 16-14 first set, then a 15-7 second set.

The women's doubles 3.5
See STAY on Page 19



LEIGH GASES

Marivic Dunlop, left, and mixed doubles partner Roy Pangelinan are seen during the Stay Out of the Kitchen Pickleball tournament last Saturday afternoon at the American Memorial Park Courts.

NMI to welcome badminton players from around the world



The two 2024 Paris Olympic qualifying tournaments that the NMI is hosting in June have so far attracted over 100 players from across the globe.

Players that have signed up for the Marianas Open that will run from June 6 to 11 and the Saipan International from June 13 to 18 are from South Korea, Australia, Singapore, Hungary, Spain, Malaysia, Chinese-Taipei, Vietnam, Guatemala, Thailand, India, Slovakia, and the U.S. mainland.

Chinese-Taipei has the most participants so far with more than 30, while four countries have registered at least 10 players for each competition that the Northern Marianas Badminton Association is hosting with sanctioned and guidance from Badminton Oceania and Badminton World Federation.

"We are excited to welcome these athletes to the NMI as they vie for qualifying points

for the 2024 Paris Olympics. We've seen a high-level competition last year when we hosted the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games and expect even higher level of games come this June," Northern Marianas Badminton Association president Merlie Tolentino said.

Tolentino added that the competition is also good for NMBA volunteers and technical officials, who received training from Badminton Oceania in the last Pacific Mini Games and now have more opportunities to officiate

See NMI on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Top photo shows the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, which will be the venue for the two 2024 Paris Olympics qualifying tournaments that the NMI will be hosting this June. Bottom shows the NMI's Andreau Galvez, left, and Jordan Pangilinan competing against Wallis & Futuna during the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games.

